

## Crown Prince receives ICC delegation

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan received at the Royal Court Saturday a delegation representing the International Coordination Committee (ICC) comprising prominent religious personalities, academics and researchers and stressed the need for respecting the diversity of the followers of the various religions. The Crown Prince also stressed the importance of dialogue in developing a code of conduct to build on the common values among the various monotheistic faiths. Prince Hassan outlined to the delegation from more than 10 countries Jordan's endeavours to enhance dialogue among the various religions and the construction of a durable and comprehensive peace that can guarantee the rights of all parties in the Middle East.

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## Beirut court sentences seven for trade with Israel

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's military court has sentenced seven Lebanese Christians to jail terms of up to 15 years for commercial dealings with Israel, judicial sources said Saturday. The permanent military court announced the sentences late on Friday, the sources said. Five men received sentences of up to 18 months imprisonment, and two, both residents of the self-declared Israeli "security zone" in south Lebanon, were sentenced in absentia for 15 years' jail with hard labour, they added. "The seven people were found guilty of making contacts with the Israeli enemy and its clients and for making commercial deals with residents in Israel," the sources said.

## 2 Palestinians hurt in West Bank protests over prisoners in Israel

BETHLEHEM (R) — Israeli troops wounded two Palestinians on Saturday during West Bank protest marches in support of Arab prisoners held in Israeli jails, witnesses said.

Thousands of Palestinians marched in Palestinian National Authority (PNA) ruled cities across the West Bank and in Arab east Jerusalem in simultaneous demonstrations calling on the Jewish state to free jailed Palestinians and improve their prison conditions.

In Bethlehem, Israeli troops fired tear gas at some 500 marchers as they approached an Israeli checkpoint near a Jewish shrine on the outskirts of the PNA-ruled city, drawing a hail of stones and bottles from Palestinian youths.

Witnesses said soldiers then fired rubber bullets to disperse the stone-throwing youths, wounding two.

The Israeli army said it was checking the report. In downtown Arab east Jerusalem, Israeli police said they forcefully dispersed some 50 protesters in a demonstration they said took place "illegally."

In PNA-ruled Nablus, protesters wrapped themselves in thick iron chains, and mothers and wives of prisoners held photographs of their jailed family members while

demonstrators chanted "no peace without prisoners' freedom."

Protesters from all Palestinian political factions were present and representatives of the PNA and Hamas addressed the Nablus rally. "We want to put the focus on the prisoner issues, and to protest their harsh conditions in Israeli jails, and to put pressure on the Israeli side to release them," said Raed Amr, chairman of the Prisoners Association in Nablus.

Demonstrators delivered protest letters to International Red Cross offices in the West Bank.

There are about 3,700 Palestinians in jails in the Jewish state, according to Israeli figures. Israel has freed some 7,500 prisoners in peace gestures since it signed its historic 1993 interim peace deal with the PLO.

Only about 50 of that number, mainly women, have been released under the administration of right-wing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The rest were freed under the centre-left government Mr. Netanyahu ousted in May 1996.

Mr. Netanyahu was compelled this month to free Israel's number one prisoner, Hamas founder Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, and 20 other Arab inmates to secure the



Armed Israeli border police push back Palestinian demonstrators in Arab east Jerusalem Sunday (Reuters photo)

release of two Israeli Mossad assassins caught in Amman in a bid to kill a top Hamas leader.

Israel also promised to free about 50 more prisoners in the swap.

Long-stalled Israeli-Palestinian committee talks on Israel's peace pledge to free Arab prisoners resumed this month after seven months of deadlock.

## Australian tourist wounded in Jerusalem knife attack

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — An Australian tourist was lightly wounded Saturday in a knife attack in the Old City of Arab east Jerusalem, Israeli police reported. The tourist was struck in the back with a knife by an unknown attacker while walking on Al Alam street in the Old City, the police said. The assailant fled immediately after the attack. The police, who did not give the identity of the victim, said no motive was known for the attack.

## Sharon in Jordan Wednesday for water talks with Haddadin

AMMAN (J.T.) — Israeli Minister of Infrastructure Ariel Sharon is expected to visit Jordan on Wednesday to follow up discussions on water issues with Minister of Water and Irrigation Munther Haddadin, according to informed diplomatic sources here quoted by Al Ra'i daily Saturday.

The sources said that the two ministers will also discuss joint projects for the development of the Jordan Rift Valley, adding that Mr. Sharon will meet with a number of Jordanian officials to discuss the Aqaba-Eilat airport project and other outstanding issues during his two-day visit.

Meanwhile, the head of Hamas bureau in Amman Khaled Misha'al Saturday denied that Dr. Haddadin brought Hamas a message from the Israeli government

about a dialogue between the two sides, stressing that nothing of this has happened.

Mr. Misha'al was quoted by Al Arab Al Yawm daily emphasising that his movement's stand towards the Israeli enemy is unchanged. "There will be no dealing directly or indirectly or through mediators with Israel," said Mr. Misha'al.

The Jordanian government has welcomed the visit to Jordan by Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov who will arrive here Monday as part of his Middle East tour. Minister of Foreign Affairs Fayez Tarawneh said Jordan was looking forward towards this visit during which a comprehensive evaluation of the peace process will be made.

## Russia's Primakov in Syria on Middle East peace tour

DAMASCUS (R) — Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov arrived in Damascus Saturday on the second leg of a tour intended to revive the Middle East peace process, the official Syrian news agency, SANA, said.

Foreign Minister Primakov, who arrived from Lebanon, is also to visit Israel, Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority ruled areas on his trip through the region.

"Russia insists that the peace process in the region resume on the basis of [the 1991] conference in Madrid and the land-for-peace principle," SANA quoted Mr. Primakov as saying.

"...There would be no peace without [achieving] progress on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks," he added.

Russia's ambassador in Damascus said earlier that the Russian foreign minister intended to discuss a resumption of talks between Syria and Israel when he met President Hafez Assad.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, elected last year, has vowed not to return the Golan Heights it has occupied since 1967, a stand condemned by the Damascus government.

It has insisted that no talks will be held until Mr. Netanyahu changes his

policies and accepts the principle of trading land for peace.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Sharaa said his government wanted Russia to join a committee set up in 1996 to monitor an undertaking by Hizbollah and Israeli forces not to attack civilians in south Lebanon. The committee groups the U.S., France, Syria, Lebanon and Israel.

"From the beginning we wanted Russia to be one of the members of the... committee. We tried our best for that and if the issue should arise, we would support Russia's presence," Mr. Sharaa said.

## Hizbollah wounds two Israeli soldiers in southern Lebanon

MARIJAYOUN (R) — Hizbollah guerrillas wounded two Israeli soldiers, one seriously, in an overnight rocket attack in Israel's self-declared "security zone" in south Lebanon, pro-Israeli militia security sources said Saturday.

An Israeli officer was seriously injured and a soldier lightly wounded when the guerrillas attacked their position in Kassarit Al Uroush in the eastern sector of the self-declared zone with rockets, the South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia sources said.

They said the officer was taken to Israel by helicopter. The Israeli army issued a statement confirming the attack. "An officer was seriously wounded last night and another soldier lightly hurt in a clash with terrorists during operational activity near Reihan Post in the eastern sector of the security zone in south Lebanon," it said.

It said the Israeli forces

came under fire from mortar bombs and missiles during the incident.

In Beirut, Hizbollah claimed responsibility for the attack.

"Late after midnight, our fighters succeeded in entering Kassarit Al Uroush position after fierce fighting with a Zionist force. One Zionist tank was destroyed and many soldiers fell wounded or killed," Hizbollah said in a statement faxed to Reuters.

The security sources said that after the attack Israeli warplanes raided suspected Hizbollah positions in the hills of Iqlim Al Tuffah, just north of the "security" zone.

They also struck at suspected positions of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) in Na'amah, a coastal town 20 kilometres south of Beirut.

The sources said two Israeli planes fired six rockets at the hills of Iqlim Al Tuffah and

one plane fired two rockets at the entrance to Na'amah. No casualties were reported in the attacks, which bring to 69 the number of air raids on Lebanon this year.

The PFLP-GC said in a statement faxed to Reuters that the Israeli raids had hit civilian targets.

"The Zionist warplanes targeted PFLP-GC's centres of social and health care in Na'amah where a civilian house was partly destroyed but caused no casualties," the statement said.

Hizbollah guerrillas are fighting to drive Israeli troops and their local militia allies from the 15 kilometres wide self-declared "security" zone in south Lebanon.

Israel has suffered heavy losses in south Lebanon this year, with 39 of its soldiers killed and 81 wounded. Fifty-one guerrillas, mostly Hizbollah fighters, have died and 19 been injured in the fighting.

## Rival Iraqi-Kurd factions continue fighting; Turkish air raids reported

ANKARA (AFP) — Northern Iraq's rival Kurd factions reported heavy fighting Saturday near the Iraqi-Iranian border, with one side accusing Turkish warplanes of bombing its positions to tip the balance against it.

The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) accused Turkey of launching new air attacks on its positions as it continued two days of fighting with arch-rival, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP).

A spokesman for the PUK, Shazad Saib, told Agence France Presse in Ankara that "Turkish planes on Saturday bombed PUK positions east of Rawanduz [near the Iraqi-Iranian border]... to support the KDP."

No immediate comment on the reported Turkish attacks was available from Ankara. The radios of the PUK and

KDP issued conflicting reports of casualties from the renewed fighting which started Thursday, with each claiming heavy losses among enemy ranks, Turkey's Anatolian news agency reported.

PUK Radio said that 100 fighters from the KDP were killed in clashes in northern Iraq.

But KDP Radio denied the death toll and said that 16 members of the PUK were killed in the fighting, the agency reported.

Both sides also blame each other for shattering a week-long truce brokered by the U.S., Great Britain and Turkey.

KDP Radio accused another faction, the Turkish-Kurd separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), of supporting PUK units in the fighting.

The KDP broadcast said

the PUK and PKK suffered "at least 16" dead in the Guman region east of Rawanduz, and "heavy losses" in the region of Kou Sen-jag, in the southeast of the main Kurdish city of Erbil.

The PUK and KDP have fought sporadically since a peace-sharing agreement between them broke down in 1994. Baghdad lost control over the north of Iraq following the end of the Gulf war in 1991.

More than 2,500 people have been killed in fighting in northern Iraq since 1994. A first ceasefire negotiated between the rival Kurd groups by Washington, London, and Ankara in October 1996 was largely observed before breaking down earlier this month.

## Syria assails Turkish zone in north Iraq

DAMASCUS (R) — Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Sharaa said Saturday that a Turkish security zone in northern Iraq would not be legitimate and would lead to tension in the region.

"This security zone has no legitimacy within the framework of the international law," the official Syrian news agency, SANA, quoted Mr. Sharaa as saying at the arrival of Russian For-

eign Affairs Minister Yevgeny Primakov in Damascus.

"Anything that contradicts international law and violates the integrity and sovereignty of countries leads to tension in the region," Mr. Sharaa added, in comments that SANA said Mr. Primakov agreed with.

When Turkey withdrew its forces after its recent incursion into northern Iraq against Kurdish

Labour Party forces, it said it would leave around 8,000 troops in the area to protect its southeastern region against the rebel Kurds.

Baghdad lost control over the north of the country after the 1991 Gulf war, and the area is now divided among feuding Kurdish factions, protected from Baghdad by an air umbrella provided by the Gulf war allies.

## Arafat calls for European Union pressure on Israel

BONN (R) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat urged Europe on Saturday to put "constructive pressure" on Israel to break a deadlock in Middle East peace talks.

President Arafat told a news conference with Germany's Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel that Israel could not expect to benefit from trade with Europe without accepting that the European Union (EU) had a political role to play.

"Sixty per cent of Israel's economy is bound up with Europe," the Palestinian president said. "How can it expect to play the economic card without having the political card played too?"

The Palestinian leader, on the final day of a visit to Germany, accused Israel's right-wing Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu of blocking peace with his policy of settling Jews in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and halting Israeli troop redeployments.

The 1993 Oslo agreement on Palestinian self-rule has been stalled since Mr. Netanyahu broke ground on a Jewish settlement on the hilltop of Jabal Abu Ghneim in Arab east Jerusalem in March.

"We are calling for constructive pressure on the Netanyahu government to continue the peace process and implement the agreements that it has made," President Arafat added.

He acknowledged that the 15 EU states could not impose economic sanctions on Israel. The pressure should be political.

The EU is the biggest aid donor to the Palestinians but

Israel has shut it out of the diplomatic arena fearing what it regards as a sympathy for the Palestinian cause. The Jewish state insists only its ally the U.S. can mediate.

Mr. Kinkel said he would convey President Arafat's message to a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Luxembourg this weekend.

But he said Germany had only limited ability to influence Israel "because of our past."

Germany has flexed its diplomatic muscle in the Middle East since its 1990 unification and the Oslo accords but it has shielded Israel in debates within the EU. It is the biggest European aid donor to the Palestinians.



By Ghaila Alul  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Former Islamic Action Front (IAF) Deputy Abdullah Akaileh, former Deputy Rafeh Saoud and Arab Land Party Secretary General Mohammad Oran, appear poised to capture the three seats allocated to the Tafileh District in the upcoming elections, analysts say.

In this tribally dominated city of 60,000 people, 225 kilometres south of the capital, candidates are largely dependant on their tribal and family votes to take them to the 13th Parliament.

Dr. Akaileh, a prominent but moderate Islamist leader, told the Jordan Times Saturday that he was sure of winning and he did not need to

## Tafileh governed more by tribal influence than political affiliation

use any conventional campaigning. "I did not put up any banners or slogans since I am sure of people's confidence in my platform," he said.

"With God's grace, I know I will get votes from each family and tribe in Tafileh," said Dr. Akaileh, who comes from the town of Aimah, north west of the southern district.

Observers expect Dr. Akaileh to win 800 votes from his own hometown, and an additional 300 from three other tribes including Al Hmeidar to which Dr. Oran belongs, as well as the Baharat and Qatifa tribes.

In the last elections, Dr. Akaileh won with 2,398 votes.

Dr. Akaileh, who was recently expelled from the Muslim Brotherhood for defying their boycott of the

elections, can still count on the Islamist vote bank because analysts believe that tribal bonds are stronger than ideological affiliations in this town.

He is also expected to receive another 800 votes from other towns in Tafileh, such as Al Hamaideh and Qada' Bseifa as well as Al Hassa where no local candidates are in the race.

Meanwhile, Rafeh Saoud, an Aimah folk fellow of Akaileh, who observers in Tafileh think will garner 1,300 votes from his tribe and an additional 1600 votes from his hometown, is considered one of the winners in this constituency.

Dr. Saoud, who won with 1,931 votes in the last elections, is one of the 11 candidates countrywide running under the National Constitutional Party's ticket.

Mr. Oran, another forerunner in this campaign is tipped by observers to win a total of around 1,700 votes.

In Tafileh District, where 32,111 voters are registered, the 17 candidates pledged efforts to alleviate poverty and unemployment which are the most prominent problems in the southern town.

The candidates' banners promised the establishment of colleges and universities as well as the construction of dams and the creation of industrial zones.

Also strong candidates for the three seats are Qusai Mahasneh, Yahya Khawaldeh, Ibrahim Jfout and Sidqi Shbatat.

One of the candidates, Mousa Mas'adeen, withdrew from the race in support of his fellow tribesman, Mohammad Zidaneen.

Candidate Odeh Sawalqa

of Hamaideh tribe, Friday gathered about 3,000 people outside the Grand Mosque in Central Tafileh after the mid-day prayers and addressed them about his electoral programme.

Tafileh Governor Nayef Njadar described Mr. Sawalqa's move as violating the Election Law which bans electioneering in mosques. However, the candidate vowed to repeat the same move next Friday.

Until yesterday evening, a total of 25,930 vote cards were distributed in Tafileh so far compared to a total of 24,366 in the 1993 elections.

Al Ra'i correspondent in Tafileh, Ghazi Amreen, contributed to this story.



Two days on, voting fraud still haunts Algeria vote

ALGIERS (AFP) — Cries of voting fraud continued to ring out in Algeria on Saturday, following Thursday's sweeping victory for allies of President Liamine Zeroual in local-level elections.

The venerable opposition Socialist Forces Front (FFS) spoke of an "electoral hold-up" joined the newer Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD) in alleging massive fraud in this North African nation, scene of a particularly violent Islamic insurgency.

Criticism was also heard from the National Liberation Front (FLN), once Algeria's sole political party, while the moderate Islamist Movement of Society for Peace (MSP) was less strident.

Thursday's elections saw the National Democratic Rally (RND) clinch more than 55 per cent of seats in commune-level councils, according to official results.

The RND was only founded last February by allies of Mr. Zeroual, including Prime Minister Ahmad Ouyahia.

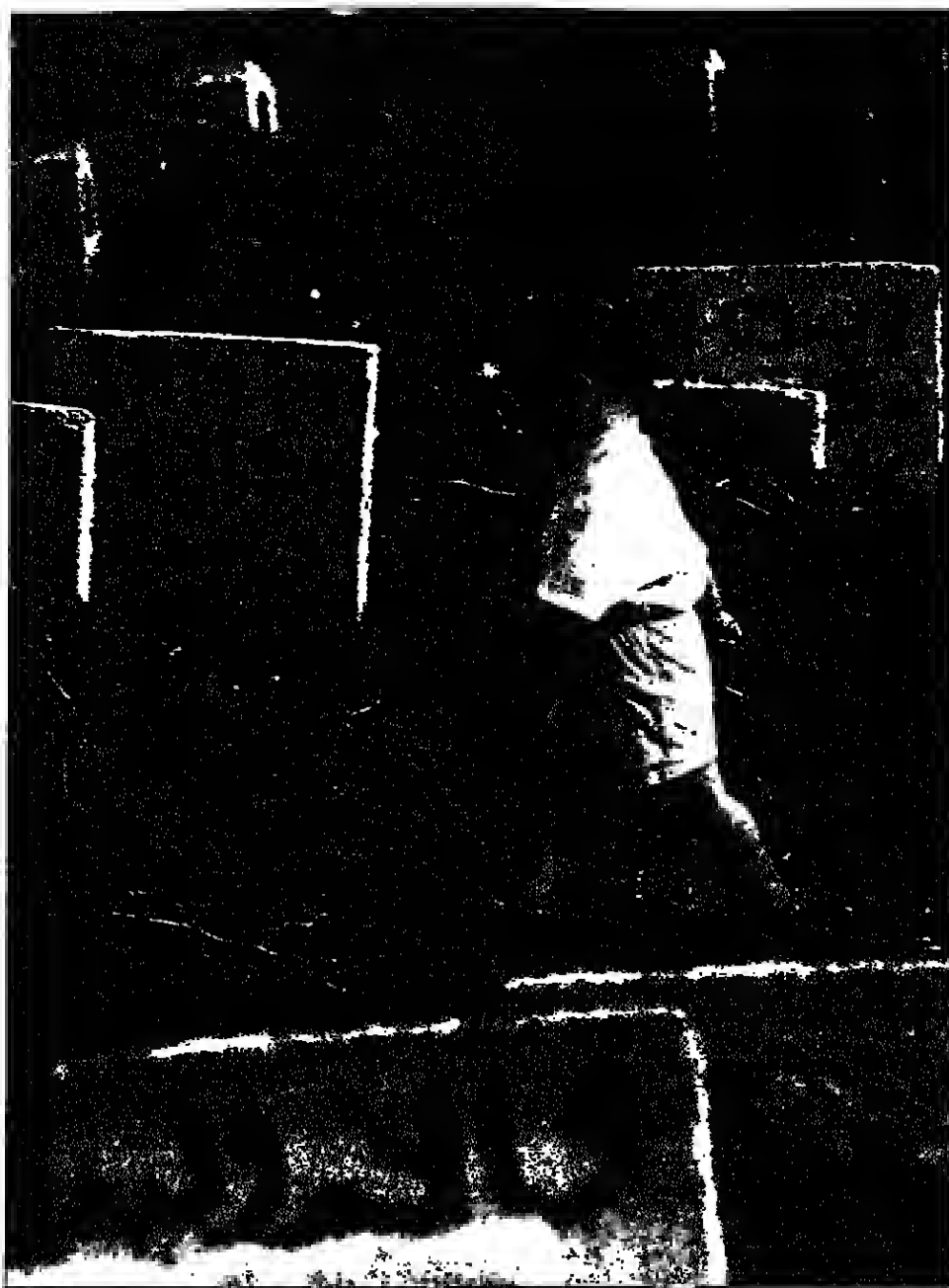
It led a victory by secular forces in last June's national assembly elections that was supposed to help mark the end of an Islamic uprising that has claimed more than 60,000 lives.

Instead the nation — plagued by a chronic lack of jobs and housing despite rich oil and gas reserves in the Sahara — is going through another round of bomb attacks and village massacres.

Since the June election the FLN and the MSP have joined with the RND in Ouyahia's government, but the local elections have brought some rift to their unity.

Overall, the allegations from opposition parties ring similarly — stuffed ballot boxes, misuse of proxy votes, ballot-counting in the absence of scrutineers, and threats against candidates.

Speaking on Europe 1 Radio, Algeria's first post-colonial President Ahmad Ben Bella said the local elections would do nothing



A child walks in the Sidi R'zine cemetery near Benthala in the Mitidja plain near Algiers on Saturday. More than two hundred people have been murdered by terrorists in this area controlled by the Algerian army in the past (Reuters photo)

to resolve the crisis in his homeland.

"The problem in Algeria is not a problem of an institutional void," he said. "The problem is political. In fact, never was this dealt with in a serious way."

"Violence has only grown," he added, calling for the government to ease off its use of military force against Islamists and give more attention to dialogue.

MSP leader Mahfouz Nahnah told Barcelona's La Vanguardia newspaper Sat-

urday that "elements in power" were conspiring to continue a crisis that Algeria was otherwise now ready to end.

"Those committing (electoral) fraud are not the terrorists, but the administration," he said.

In Algiers on Friday, police were deployed outside Mr. Zeroual's offices to halt a protest called by the FFS, RCD, FLN and MSP. No incidents of violence were seen.

Undeterred, the FLN and

RCD were trying Saturday to mount two other demonstrations in Algiers.

RCD leaders, quoted in the Algerian press, vowed to "turn Algiers into Belgrade" by organising daily protests in front of their headquarters in the centre of the capital.

While opposition parties were expected to try to find some way of coordinating their outrage on the national level, it was hard to predict if a genuine common front might emerge.

Ben Bella unaware of chemical tests

PARIS (AFP) — Former Algerian president Ahmad Ben Bella Saturday denied all knowledge of a secret deal between Algeria and Paris allowing France to test chemical weapons in Algeria. Tests were carried out over 16 years at a covert military base in the Sahara under a secret annex to the 1962 accord which ended Algeria's war of independence with France, the French magazine the Nouvel Observateur reported Thursday.

"I never knew of experiments which were done under the chemical programme," said Ben Bella, who became the first president of an independent Algeria in 1963, but was in prison in 1962 at the time of the deal after his capture during the war.

The existence of the 2,500-square-kilometre base — codenamed "B2-Namous" — was revealed in an interview, carried by the magazine, with Pierre Messmer, then armed forces minister under President Charles de Gaulle.

The 1962 Evian independence accords stipulated that France would retain four nuclear and space test sites in the central Sahara. These would be handed back to the Algerian authorities in 1967 as agreed.

However a secret annex covered a chemical weapons base founded in 1935 near Ben-Wenif in the northern Sahara, some 100 kilometres from the Moroccan border, the magazine said.

Mr. Ahmad Bella said he had opposed nuclear tests "allowed under the Evian agreement when he became president."

According to the magazine, the 1962 deal was secretly renewed in 1967 and 1972.

Iraq's parliament to discuss U.N. Security Council travel ban threat

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq's parliament will meet on Saturday to discuss the United Nations Security Council threat to tighten sanctions on Baghdad, a senior Iraqi official said.

"The national assembly will hold a session today to discuss the resolution and adopt suitable recommendations," Saad Qasim Hammoudi, head of the assembly's Arab and international relations committee, told Reuters.

The revolutionary command council, at a meeting chaired by President Saddam Hussein, Friday asked the assembly to consider how to respond to the U.N. resolution threatening to impose a travel ban on Iraqi officials who the U.N. considered to have obstructed visiting U.N. weapons inspection teams.

The discussions are expected to continue for today and tomorrow before the assembly submits its recommendations to the [Iraqi] leadership," Mr. Hammoudi said.

He declined to say what the recommendations would be, but said the assembly's Arab and international relations, law and oil and energy commit-

tees had submitted to the parliament a study on the resolution.

A divided U.N. Security Council Thursday issued a resolution threatening Iraq with new travel sanctions in the future, after the U.S. and Britain failed to win agreement to impose the travel curbs at once.

The council voted 10 to 0 with five abstentions — France, Russia, China, Egypt and Kenya — to express its "firm intention" to impose measures to prevent travel abroad by Iraqi officials responsible for blocking U.N. weapons inspection teams.

The resolution called for a list of Iraqis who have blocked U.N. inspections and threatened to ban them from travel abroad.

The council would have to take another vote before any action was taken.

The resolution was a response to an October report by Richard Butler, chairman of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) set up by the Security Council to disarm Iraq under the terms of the 1991 Gulf war ceasefire.

He said Baghdad had blocked U.N. inspectors from several weapons sites.

The Iraqi press Saturday condemned the resolution and one paper said Iraq should change its attitude toward the Security Council.

"The Security Council issued a bad resolution," the government newspaper Al Jumhuriya said in a front-page editorial.

"Our patience with the contradictory performance of the Security Council...has reached a stage when every thing [with the Security Council] should be reviewed," the paper said.

Iraq's most influential newspaper, Babel, urged Arab countries to adopt a firm stand against the U.N. resolution.

"The new Security Council resolution is worth an immediate Arab meeting to reject such a decision and adopt another which calls for ending sanctions on Iraq," said Babel, owned by the president's eldest son Uday.

Scrapping Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and making sure they are not replaced is a key requirement for lifting the embargo on exports, such as oil, according to a 1991 Gulf war ceasefire resolution.

S. Lankan in Kuwait faces the gallows for murder

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — A Sri Lankan car cleaner in Kuwait has been sentenced to hang for killing his lover after she threatened to expose their affair, the official news agency KUNA said Saturday.

The Sri Lankan confessed to killing his lover, another Sri Lankan who was already married, after she threatened to expose their relationship to his company, KUNA said.

The criminal court convicted him of premeditated murder and sentenced him

to death, which was upheld by the first court of appeal, it said.

The Sri Lankan has one more chance to appeal against his conviction, and if unsuccessful the sentence must be approved by Emir Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah before it is carried out.

A total of 21 people have been hanged in Kuwait since 1964. The last hangings took place on Sept. 21 when two Egyptians convicted of murder were executed.

Crash kills 48 in Turkey

ANKARA (R) — Forty-eight people burned to death in a collision between a tanker lorry and a coach in southern Turkey overnight, Anatolian news agency said Saturday.

It said 46 coach passengers were killed when their vehicle crashed into the tanker and burst into flames, as they were travelling on a main road between the towns of Kayseri and Konya.

Two people in the tanker, which was not carrying fuel, were also killed in the accident at 10.30 p.m. local time Friday evening, the agency said.

The bodies were badly burned, making identification difficult and emergency workers said they had identified four people among the 33 male and 15 female victims.

Three people were injured in the accident, but were not in a serious condition, Anatolian said. Earlier it had reported that five people had been hurt.

Coach driver Muammer Cicekyurt, who survived the crash with slight injuries, blamed the lorry driver.

"I wanted to warn the driver of the tanker in my lane but he kept on coming towards us," he said.

Faced with record population growth Oman campaigning to 'nationalise' labour pool

MUSCAT (AFP) — Oman, which is experiencing record population growth, is leading the way among Gulf countries in slashing the foreign-dominated labour pool to secure jobs for its own people.

Oman, like its neighbours threatened with unemployment of its own citizens whom the public sector can no longer absorb, began setting quotas in 1984 for private-sector employment of Omanis.

Banks, the first to be targeted, must employ nine Omanis for every 10 staff

members, while insurance, trade, industry, construction and hotels have minimum quotas for Omanis ranging from 15 to 60 per cent.

Employers are threatened with denial of visas for importing labour, loss of public sector contracts and fines if they fail to fill their quotas by the end of 1997.

Other countries in the region where millions of Asians work are beginning to imitate this policy but are meeting resistance from employers.

"I believe that 'Omanisation' cannot be based on

converting the private sector into charitable institutions, forcing it to absorb nationals," said Khamis Hashar, a businessman from Muscat.

Omani Chamber of Commerce Vice President Jamil Sultan said: "We are asking for time. The negative part is productivity; the private sector is looking for profit."

However, he said it is less expensive to train an Omani to perform a task than to import a qualified technician for whom the employer must pay housing, food, transportation,

children's education and a roundtrip ticket home every year in addition to a salary.

The employer also has to pay a five per cent tax on a foreigner's salary and cover his medical expenses, while medical care is free for Omanis.

"You have to create people who are creative who put in more than they receive rather than sitting on their backsides," said Mr. Hashar.

"I've had to absorb people who didn't fit in or whose production is below requirement," he said.

Because Oman's population of 2.2 million residents is increasing at a rate of 3.7 per cent per year, the highest growth rate on the Arabian Peninsula, and more than half of the population is under the age of 20, the country faces the worst potential unemployment problem in the region.

Omanis make up only 30 per cent of the country's workforce, with most of them employed in the public sector including the military.

The government, which no longer can guarantee its

people civil-service jobs, is trying to get the youth into the private sector. It has increased training courses for Omanis and training centres have opened across the country for technicians, accountants and nurses.

Sultan Qaboos last month asked the university, which admits 1,800 students every year, to take another 500 for the 1997 academic year. The move "created havoc" as the university does not have the facilities or the staff to cope, a Western diplomat said.

The university and technical schools together can

hardly take half of the 18,000 to 20,000 young people who graduate from secondary school every year, diplomats say.

Omani youths without qualifications must compete with the 400,000 Indians, Pakistanis and Filipinos who get paid less than Omanis for doing the same work.

The Asians average monthly salaries of \$157 while an Omani can command \$525.

"The businessmen are hooked on cheap labour," the Western diplomat said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

- 14:10 Little Rosey
- 14:30 Jonny Quest
- 14:50 The Magic School Bus
- 15:00 Energy Express
- 15:30 American Chart Show
- 16:30 The Wizard
- 17:00 French Programmes
- 19:00 News in French
- 19:30 News Headlines
- 19:35 Fresh Prince of Belair
- 20:00 Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
- 20:30 The struggle for Democracy
- 21:10 Renegade
- 22:00 News in English
- 22:30 One West Walkiki
- 23:15 Sisters
- 23:59 End of T.V.

PRAYER TIMES

- 04:25 Fajr
- 05:43 (Sunrise) Duha
- 11:20 Dhuh
- 14:28 'Asr
- 16:56 Maghreb
- 18:14 'Isha

CHURCHES

- St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Welfrich, Tel. 810740
- Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
- St. Joseph Church, Tel. 624590
- Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church

- Tel. 661757
- Terra Sancta Church, Tel. 622366
- Anglican Church, Tel. 652826
- Armenian Catholic Church, Tel. 771331
- Armenian Orthodox Church, Tel. 775261
- St. Ephraim Church, Tel. 771751
- Armenian International Church, Tel. 5516245
- Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tel. 824328
- German-speaking Evangelical Congregation, Tel. 688404
- The Latter-Day Saints, Tel. 654932
- Church of Nazarene, Tel. 675691
- The Evangelical Local Church in Amman, Tel. 811295
- English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish, Tel. 614190

Min/Max. temp.

- Amman 13/28
- Aqaba 19/33
- Deserts 12/30
- Jordan Valley 19/33

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 27, Aqaba 32 Humidity readings: Amman 31 per cent, Aqaba 28 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

- AMMAN: Dr. Youssef Rashid 875792
- Dr. Walid Al Masri 675485
- Dr. Khalil Al Jmal 740740
- Dr. Jum'a Abu Dhiab 758848
- Firas pharmacy 661912
- Ferdows pharmacy 778336
- Al Asema pharmacy 637055
- Nairookh pharmacy 623672
- Al Salam pharmacy 636730
- Yacoub pharmacy 644945
- Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
- Najib pharmacy 847632
- IRBID: Dr. Ahmad Qam 281484

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Moderate weather conditions will prevail with temperatures rising slightly becoming four degrees centigrade above average and winds southwesterly moderate. On Monday, clouds are expected to build up with a chance of rain and

Al Quds pharmacy

- ARQA: Dr. Walid Halaseh 982799
- Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

- Food Control Centre 637111
- Civil Defence Department 661111
- Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
- Civil Defence Emergency 199
- Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
- Fire Brigade 617101
- Blood Bank 775121
- Highway Police 843402
- Traffic Police 396390
- Public Security Dept. 630321
- Hotel Complaints 605800
- Price Complaints 661176
- Water & Sewage Complaints 897467
- Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
- Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
- Overseas Calls 010230
- Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
- Abdali Tel. Repairs 661101
- Jordan Television 773111
- Radio Jordan 774111
- Water Authority 680100
- J. Electricity Authority 815615
- Electric Power Co. 636381
- RJ Flight Information 08-53200
- Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

AMMAN: Dr. Youssef Rashid

- 875792
- Dr. Walid Al Masri 675485
- Dr. Khalil Al Jmal 740740
- Dr. Jum'a Abu Dhiab 758848
- Firas pharmacy 661912
- Ferdows pharmacy 778336
- Al Asema pharmacy 637055
- Nairookh pharmacy 623672
- Al Salam pharmacy 636730
- Yacoub pharmacy 644945
- Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
- Najib pharmacy 847632
- IRBID: Dr. Ahmad Qam 281484

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HOSPITALS

- AMMAN: Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
- Khalidi Maternity 644281/6
- Akileh Maternity 642441/2
- Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
- Malhas, J. Amman 636140
- Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
- Shmeisani Hospital 669131
- University Hospital 845814
- Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
- The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
- Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
- Italian, Al-Muhajiree 777101/3
- Al-Bashir 775111/26
- Army, Marka 891611/15
- Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
- Amal Hospital 674155
- The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
- ZARQA: Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09983323
- Zarqa National Hospital 09900560
- Ibn Sina Hospital 09986732
- Al Hikma Modern Hospital 09990990
- IRBID: Princess Basma Hospital 02275535
- Greek Catholic Hospital 02272275
- Ibn Al Nufes Hospital 02247100

AQABA: Princess Haya Hospital

- 03314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 08 (53700)

ARRIVALS

- Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
- 08:25 Bombay (RJ)
- 08:35 Jeddah (RJ)
- 09:15 Doha, Riyadh (RJ)
- 09:45 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
- 09:50 Doha, Lamaca (RJ)
- 09:50 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
- 10:40 Beirut (RJ)
- 15:15 Brussels (RJ)
- 16:05 Paris (add) (RJ)
- 16:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
- 17:05 Paris (RJ)
- 17:45 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
- 17:45 London (RJ)
- 18:10 Athens (RJ)

Other Flights

- 03:25 Rome (AZ)
- 10:00 Sanaa (TY)
- 12:25 Bahrain (GF)
- 13:00 Moscow (SU)
- 15:00 Doha (QR)
- 17:45 Jeddah (SV)
- 20:00 Tel Aviv (LY)
- 20:10 Beirut (ME)
- 20:40 Cairo (MS)
- 23:10 Istanbul (TK)

DEPARTURES

- Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
- 06:25 Paris (add) (RJ)
- 06:30 Lamaca (RJ)
- 07:15 Beirut (RJ)
- 10:45 Frankfurt (RJ)
- 10:50 Aqaba, Vienna (RJ)

Other Flights

- 03:00 Athens (OA)
- 04:20 Rome (AZ)
- 06:15 Beirut (ME)
- 06:40 Beirut, London (BA)
- 07:50 London (BA)
- 11:00 Sanaa (TY)
- 13:15 Doha (GF)
- 14:50 Moscow (SU)
- 15:55 Doha (QR)
- 19:15 Jeddah (SV)
- 21:20 Tel Aviv (LY)
- 21:40 Cairo (MS)

Other Flights

- Royal Wings (RW)
- 06:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
- 08:15 Aqaba (RW)
- 09:30 Amman (QAIA) (RW)
- 16:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
- 17:55 Tel Aviv (RW)
- 20:30 Amman (QAIA) (RW)
- 21:50 Aqaba (RW)

Home No

Health care strike

Minister threatens

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NEWS

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILE

EXHIBITIONS



"Only a creative drama experience has the power to give this sense of unity," he concluded.



## Commonwealth airs divisions over economy, trade

EDINBURGH (R) — Disagreements over the pace of change in the global economy hung over the Commonwealth summit Saturday as rich countries urged small members not to duck the challenge of opening up their markets.

As leaders of the 54-nation group sought to thrash out an "Edinburgh declaration" of economic principles, British Prime Minister Tony Blair acknowledged that not everyone was happy with the headlong rush towards a global market with no barriers.

"Liberalisation is never easy but is essential for long-term global growth. We must therefore face up to the challenge of how to achieve it," a spokesman quoted Mr. Blair as saying. "Members have different perspectives but they have a common interest, which is to build global prosperity for the benefit of all our countries and all our people, and the Commonwealth has a constructive role to play in

that," he added.

The backlash against unbridled capitalism has been led by some of the Commonwealth's biggest countries.

Pakistani Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif said the triumph of economic and political liberalism marked by the end of the cold war might prove to be short-lived unless the playing fields of the new economic order were made level.

"Free markets might be the rage of our times, but its rules are strangely wayward. Market access is not readily given to the exports from developing countries," he told the meeting.

Malaysia's outspoken prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad, described the globalised economy as "anarchic."

"This is an unfair world. Many of us have struggled hard and even shed blood in order to be independent. When borders are down and the world becomes a single entity, independence can become meaningless," Mr.

Mahathir told the summit.

The belief that global trading rules are tilted against developing countries has been thrown into especially sharp relief by Caribbean countries angry over a World Trade Organisation (WTO) ruling that threatens to decimate their important banana exports to the European Union.

Antigua Prime Minister Lester Bird said the finding that EU quotas for Caribbean producers discriminated against Latin American exporters would wreak havoc and hit out at the belief in purely free markets underpinning the WTO's rule book.

"The wisdom behind the theory of immediate adjustment is the wisdom of economists who do not have to stand in the dock of democratic judgement called 'general elections', nor do they have to face the people who have been deprived of jobs," he said.

Britain, which is sympathetic to the plight of Caribbean banana growers,

announced it would convene a regional forum next spring with the Caribbean community (Caricom) to tackle problems of economic development and diversification.

Mr. Blair acknowledged that the private sector alone could not assure that the fruits of growth were fairly shared but he was adamant that no Commonwealth country could not turn its back on foreign investors if it wanted to prosper.

His spokesman played down divisions over economic issues, saying there was no great ideological rift but rather serious discussion on how best to reap the benefits of increased trade and investment.

Mr. Blair also urged fellow leaders to send out a strong message from the meeting on the importance of firm action at December's climate change conference in Kyoto, Japan, to curb global warming, which he called one of the greatest threats to sustainable development.



Commonwealth Secretary General Emeka Anyaoku (left) makes a point as Australia's Prime Minister John Howard (centre) and Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair listen before the start of the second session of the Commonwealth heads of government (Reuters photo)

## Asian crime syndicates flooding Australia with illegal immigrants

SYDNEY (AFP) — Organised Asian crime syndicates and corrupt consulate officials were helping flood Australia with illegal immigrants to aid drug smuggling, prostitution and extortion rackets, a report said Saturday.

"Human smuggling represents a serious threat to Australia," a recent closed meeting of senior police and forensic experts was warned in Sydney, the Australian newspaper said.

Richard Basham, an expert on Asian crime, told the meeting that immigrants were forced into crimes such as prostitution in "near slavery" conditions to repay debts to criminal groups for entering the country.

"Failure to repay such debts will invoke serious sanctions, including murder," said Mr. Basham.

Chinese triads and other Asian gangs saw Australia as a "soft target" and had an almost free hand in helping immigrants pose as students on sham English-language programmes. Unless immigration laws were substantially tightened the matter would only get worse, Mr. Basham said.

The meeting of the Australian Academy of Forensic Scientists was told police should treat all official documents from Asia with caution and "take

care" when exchanging sensitive information with their Asian counterparts.

Mr. Basham said corrupt consulate officials in Asia had been known to provide fake documents for illegal entry into Australia or legitimate documents to undesirable immigrants.

The meeting was also warned that the illegal immigrants were unlikely to pay tax or cooperate with Australian laws and authorities.

Some Asian cultures did not consider heroin importation and dealing, loan sharking, extortion and prostitution as serious crimes and Australia needed to be aware of these and other cultural differences when combating Asian crime, the meeting heard.

When exchanging sensitive information with their Asian counterparts.

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## Danish court rejects bid to lock up alleged nursing home killer

COPENHAGEN (AFP) — Danish police said Saturday they had failed in a court bid to lock up a former nursing home assistant charged with murdering 22 elderly people.

Denmark's Court of Appeal Friday confirmed an earlier lower court decision to release the 32-year-old woman, who is accused of killing 15 women and seven men with lethal doses of tranquillisers between 1994 and this year.

The woman was released from custody Tuesday, a day after being arrested, on the grounds that the evidence was not strong enough to justify her detention and that she was unlikely to flee.

The decision caused out-

rage in Denmark, with Copenhagen municipal authorities saying the release would provoke more fear amongst elderly people.

Police lodged an appeal and gathered more evidence to use against her. The officer in charge of the case, Kurt Jensen, said powerful new proof had been presented to the Court of Appeal but it rejected the police request.

Mr. Jensen believes the woman, who cannot be named under Danish law, may have had more victims and is studying the cases of 64 residents who died at the Copenhagen nursing home during her time there.

A 50-year-old female doctor in charge of medical con-

trol at the home has also been charged with manslaughter and serious professional misconduct, but has not been arrested.

After being suspended from the hospital she has continued to work at the surgery of a general practitioner, the public health office said.

The doctor has told police the nursing assistant acted on her own initiative to replace the patients' regular medication with the tranquilliser ketogan, which is lethal in large doses.

That conflicts with statements given by the suspected killer, who said she followed doctors' orders except in isolated emergency cases.

## 1 killed in N. Ireland blast

BELFAST (AFP) — A man was fatally wounded Saturday when a bomb blew up his car at Bangor, northeast of Belfast, Northern Ireland Minister Adam Ingram said.

The blast took place in a Protestant area known as Kilcooley.

The car caught fire after the blast, which was believed due to a device placed under the vehicle.

The man suffered serious leg injuries and died from his wounds in hospital.

There was no claim of responsibility, but security force sources said the incident was believed to be a settling of scores within the Unionist (pro-British) camp.

"We have some indication it was not sectarian," Mr. Ingram said.

The Kilcooley area has already been the scene of incident between rival paramilitary groups.

In a separate incident, the Protestant Loyal Volunteer Force militia threatened Saturday to attack a building near the site of multi-party talks on Northern Ireland's future unless Irish officials left it within 48 hours.

In a coded statement sent to Northern Ireland television station, the Unionist LVF said the building would be considered a "legitimate target."

The talks have brought together moderate Unionists and Sinn Fein, political wing of the outlawed Irish Republican Army. Informed sources said the statement was not related to the Bangor blast.

## Diana's photo removed as Charles visits landmines stand

EDINBURGH (AFP) — Charity bosses at a Red Cross anti-landmine exhibition here ordered a poster of the Princess of Wales to be taken down when Prince Charles made an unscheduled stop at the stand.

Red Cross workers were still upset about the move Saturday. "It's a shame, she did a lot for landmines. It was very disrespectful," one said.

The order to take down the poster came from the London headquarters of the charity. Prince Charles made the unscheduled stop late Friday during a tour of the centre for non-governmental organisations in Edinburgh at the Commonwealth heads of government meeting.

The poster, which was made from a photograph taken while Diana was on

her high-profile visit to Angola in January, showed her caressing the cheek of an Angolan girl whose leg had been amputated.

It said her work in raising awareness of the devastation caused by landmines was a lasting tribute to Diana.

Some workers at the exhibition said privately they were dismayed at the removal of the poster but cheered by the Prince's decision to stop off at their stall.

Frank Ryding, an anaesthetist working in the field, said the prince did not refer to the impact of Diana's public support for the cause, but that he showed himself knowledgeable on the subject of mines.

"He asked about the work in the field with mine victims and asked about the

butterfly mine. It's the one that children think is a toy because it's green and plastic," he said.

Prince Charles, who is attending his first Commonwealth summit, said during his tour of the centre that he did not know whether he would succeed his mother as head of the Commonwealth.

"I have no idea, it depends on the people," he said.

But in a later speech to a Commonwealth youth forum the prince hinted that he would like to have a role in the organisation.

Speculation about the Commonwealth's future links with the royal family has surfaced, with one official saying future British monarchs would not automatically become head of the 54-nation organisation.

## Judges, prosecutors to testify about court failures

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Top judges, prosecutors and defence lawyers will testify to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission from Monday about the country's apartheid-era legal system, which some say contributed to human rights abuses.

The General Council of the Bar of South Africa has blamed judges of systematically failing to oppose state-sponsored rights abuses under white-minority rule, which ended in the historic 1994 all-race elections.

Magistrates, meanwhile, have disagreed about the level to which the court system upheld racist legislation and aided the state in its war against anti-apartheid groups, including President Nelson Mandela's now ruling African National Congress (ANC).

In a thick submission made

public last week, the bar argued that judges were overly conservative, and presided over an "unjust" legal system.

Police and military officers detained, tortured and killed thousands of activists during apartheid, often justifying their actions by citing emergency legislation.

Some perpetrators have applied to the truth panel for amnesty in exchange for a full confession of their politically motivated acts.

Many of the appointees to the country's appellate division were hand-picked by the ruling National Party (NP), which sought to uphold sweeping state of emergency powers, the lawyers said.

"We do not subscribe to the view that judges were powerless in the face of the doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty," the group said. "South African courts were slow to respond to the blatant abuse

of administrative power which characterised the apartheid era."

At least five top judges, including former Chief Justice Michael Corbett, have admitted to failings of the court system, but say they were often not permitted to do more.

"For all the deep injustices perpetrated by law, there remained a real sense in which the techniques and procedures of law remained independent from the gross manipulation of the executive and in which justice was sometimes seen to be done," the five said in a written submission.

"No account of these years would be accurate if it were not accepted that justice was done and seen to be done in some cases," the statement added.

Four other judges, however, said "bad decisions" by the

courts were the exception rather than the rule.

"It is true there were judges who behaved badly or gave demonstrably bad decisions, but that is true of judges throughout the world; judges are but human and are bound to sometimes err," the four said in a joint submission.

Many judges were hostile to the government's policies, yet agreed to be appointed to the Supreme Court, the judges added.

The judicial hearings are expected to end Wednesday afternoon.

The truth commission is empowered to grant amnesty to perpetrators from all sides of the political spectrum who fully admit their deeds and can prove political motives. It has not been made public whether any judges or lawyers are among the nearly 7,000 people who have applied for amnesty.

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## Couple saw cars passing following Diana's limo

WASHINGTON (R) — A couple driving directly in front of the car carrying Princess Diana saw two cars pass her limousine and others approaching it from the rear before it crashed, the Fox news channel said Friday.

In a televised interview, Mohammed Medjahdi and his girlfriend, Souad Mousakkar, seemed to strengthen the theory of French investigators that a second car — perhaps a white Fiat Uno — was involved in the Paris crash

that killed Diana, her friend Dodi Fayed and their driver, Henri Paul.

The Fox report quoted Mr. Medjahdi and Ms. Mousakkar as saying their Citroën was travelling at about 80 kph and the princess's Mercedes, directly behind, seemed to be going much faster as the cars entered a tunnel alongside the Seine.

Ms. Mousakkar told the television channel, "I saw two cars drive by the Mercedes, but there were several other cars coming

up behind."

It had been known that photographers on motorcycles were pursuing Diana and Fayed.

French prosecutors say the car's driver, Henri Paul, was drunk and had taken prescription drugs, but they have not released their conclusions about the cause of the Aug. 31 crash. The search for a second car was set off by glass from a taillight and paint chips and scrapes found at the scene.

## Britain 'to adopt human rights convention'

LONDON (AP) — The government Friday announced its intention to fully incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights into British law for the first time.

Under the government's proposed legislation, people who believe their human rights have been violated will be able to seek redress through the local courts.

Home Secretary Jack Straw said such plaintiffs would "no longer have to tread the long and hard road" to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France, to obtain a ruling.

"Britain had a major role in drafting the convention and was the first to ratify it in 1951. But we have been almost alone in Europe in not incorporating it into our own law," Mr. Straw said.

"Now, nearly 50 years later, the British people's rights are coming home."

Under the legislation, local courts will be obliged to interpret British law in line with the European convention as widely as possible.

When there is a violation, British courts will be able to award damages similar to awards made by the Strasbourg court, which are relatively small compared to those made in British civil cases.

Judges will not be able to strike down existing laws that conflict with the convention, but a "fast track" procedure will be put in place for amending legislation if higher courts declare it incompatible.

The Labour government also announced it would support the establishment of a parliamentary committee on human rights, but reiterated it had no plans for a human rights commission, being sought by many civil liberties groups.

Still, the proposed legislation was welcomed Friday by John Wadham, director of the civil liberties group Liberty.

"This is the most important day in liberty's 60-year history because, for the first time, individuals will have fundamental human rights," Mr. Wadham said.

But Sir Brian Mawhinney, spokesman on home affairs for the opposition Conservative Party, criticised the legislation, saying that "for the first time in history in some cases, British judges are going to be able to tell parliament what laws they should and should not pass."

## Mild quakes shake central Italy

ROME (AFP) — Two mild earthquakes shook central Italy before dawn Saturday, but caused no casualties or property damage, the National Geophysical Institute in Rome said.

The tremors, measuring six and four respectively on the Mercalli scale, struck five minutes apart shortly after 5:00 a.m. (0300 GMT), with the epicentre in the area of Valnerina, east of Perugia.

Central Italy has been shaken by a series of earthquakes since September 26, causing 12 deaths as well as property damage in excess of \$2 billion.

Some 38,000 people are without permanent shelter after their homes were destroyed or damaged, in an area with a population of about 500,000 inhabitants.

The historic Saint Francis of Assisi basilica has been hard hit by the shocks, but part of the shrine will be reopened for religious services Sunday, Franciscan monks said.

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Home Secretary Jack Straw said such plans would "bring the long and difficult process of incorporating the Convention into British law to a conclusion."

Straw said the government had been working on the issue since 1995. But he said it was not until last year that the government decided to proceed with the legislation.

Straw said the government was committed to the Convention and that the new legislation would ensure that the Convention was fully incorporated into British law.

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A policeman checks the identities of bus passengers during the highest ever search for suspected Tamil Tiger rebels in Colombo (Reuters photo)

## U.S. air force says crash was pilot suicide

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. Air Force has concluded a pilot deliberately flew a bomb-laden warplane into a sooty peak in Colorado's Rocky Mountains six months ago to commit suicide, a Defense Department official said Friday.

Capt. Craig Butto, 32, and his A-10 Thunderbolt II disappeared during a routine training mission on April 2 when the aircraft veered off course after takeoff from Davis-Monthan Air Force base in Arizona.

An extensive three-week search, hampered by weather conditions and forbidding terrain, eventually turned up wreckage on Gold Dust Peak near Vail. The official said an Air Force report on the incident due to be released next week concluded Butto "apparently committed suicide but did not make the decision until after he was airborne."

The official said that without other evidence such as mechanical failure

or lack of oxygen causing Butto to pass out, the investigating officer came to the conclusion that Butto had intentionally flown his plane into the mountain.

"There was no evidence that he was depressed and there was no evidence of any medical problem such as hypoxia (lack of oxygen), no evidence of engine failure, or no conclusion of intentional theft of the aircraft," the official said.

"Taking all of this into its totality, the investigating officer determined that the most likely cause was unpremeditated suicide."

The official said the investigating report concluded that because the A-10 had skirted other mountains and flown over other airfields the warplane was in Butto's control at all times and the crash was "probably not an accident."

Pentagon spokesman Ken Bacon said he did not know the results of the investigation, but "suicide was always high on the list of possibilities."

Although 70 per cent of

## Sri Lanka capital sealed for search amid suicide bomber fears

COLOMBO (AFP) — The Sri Lankan capital Colombo was sealed off for nearly eight hours in an unprecedented move Saturday as security forces mounted a house-to-house search and detained nearly 1,000 suspects, police said.

All entry points to the city were closed and troops assisted by police checked identity papers and searched homes in an operation mounted just after midnight and concluded around 8:00 a.m. (0200 GMT), police said.

"The operation was a success," Colombo's police chief, Deputy-Inspector General T. B. Dissanayake, told AFP. "We have rounded up several people for questioning and the interro-

gations are now in progress."

Official sources said nearly 1,000 people, including 150 women, without proper identity papers or unable to explain their presence in the capital were detained.

The mass search followed an earlier police warning that at least two dozen suicide bombers of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were believed to have infiltrated the capital.

Even as the search began, the Tamil Tiger guerrillas attacked an army bunker line in the north of the country, killing six soldiers for the loss of three of their own men, officials said.

They said several soldiers were also wounded in the

pre-dawn attack against the army's defences at Chetikulam, about 260 kilometres north of here.

In a statement broadcast repeatedly over state radio, the Defence Ministry said no vehicles would be allowed to enter or leave Colombo during the search.

Residents were asked to stay indoors and cooperate with security forces.

"The Defence Ministry is confident that the public will bear this degree of inconvenience in the interest of national security," the statement said. However, no curfew was declared.

The ministry said the chief occupants of houses would be held within six hours if any member was detained for questioning.

During the city-wide search, people going to hospitals and the international airport were told they could proceed after establishing their identities although no other vehicles would be allowed to leave or enter Colombo, the ministry statement said.

The government action came 10 days after 20 people were killed and 105 wounded when Tamil guerrillas detonated a truck bomb in the financial centre here.

Police have warned that there could be more suicide bombings, a trade mark of the LTTE, and sought public assistance to track down rebel infiltrators in the capital and its suburbs.

## Jiang endorses key human rights covenant ahead of U.S. visit

BEIJING (AFP) — President Jiang Zemin authorised China's accession to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Saturday a day ahead of his state visit to the United States.

But relatives of China's top dissidents held out little hope that the concession on human rights would lead to prison releases during Jiang's eight-day trip.

"Today I've authorised China's permanent representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Qin Huan, to sign on behalf of the Chinese government the covenant at the United Nations headquarters," Mr. Jiang said at a media briefing before his state visit to Washington.

"This move demonstrates once again the government's staunch determination to promote human rights conditions in China and the world as a whole," he added.

The covenant is one of two major U.N. conventions on human rights, with the second being the covenant on civil and political rights, and Mr. Jiang said in April that China would sign the pact before the end of the year. But the timing of the announcement was clearly aimed at defusing heavy pressure from the United States for China to improve its human rights record and release top dissidents like Wei Jingsheng and Wang Dan ahead of the summit.

"The Chinese constitution and laws of China have clear stipulations which guarantee that the citizens of China have freedom of meeting, expression and religious belief," Mr. Jiang said in response to a question about their possible release.

"You just referred to those people as dissidents. However, their cases were not handled because of their political views or religious beliefs but because they had violated specific laws of China," he added.

In the past, China has released a number of its well-known dissidents by freeing them on medical parole or the condition they leave the country. But the families of Wang and Wei were pessimistic that Beijing — which keeps insisting that the judiciary is an independent arm and not subject to political pressures — would be freed.

"I don't expect too much from President Jiang Zemin's visit to the United States," Mr. Wang's mother, Wang Lingyun, said in a telephone interview. "Last

## Experts raise alarm bells over spread of AIDS

MANILA (AFP) —

Experts and officials Saturday raised alarm bells over the spread of AIDS in the Asia-Pacific region and called for a united effort to prevent the deadly condition.

Philippine President Fidel Ramos, in a keynote address at the opening of an international conference on AIDS here, said it was "time for the people of the Asia-Pacific to recognise the imminent danger of the AIDS challenge."

He said governments must not "sidestep the issue using lack of resources as an excuse" and called on nations to "share experiences... and be united in an unwavering commitment to combat (the spread of) AIDS."

The Filipino leader admitted that the search for an antidote against AIDS had been concentrated in the West because most Asian countries could not afford the cost of medical research.

But "this should not lead us to be defeatist in our attitudes," he said.

Mr. Ramos said his country "will not stop with mere directives or expressions of support" but take concrete action like hastening the approval of a bill boosting AIDS education and protecting the rights of AIDS victims.

Han Sang Tae, head of the World Health Organisation's Western Pacific office based in Manila, said efforts to fight AIDS would require a "rapid response

from all of us."

Only "aggressive and appropriate intervention can reduce the numbers," he added.

Gilles Pomeroy, WHO regional adviser for AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, said HIV cases in the Asia-Pacific region would reach eight to nine million by 2000 from the current estimate of about four million.

"The epidemic in Asia started 10 years later than most areas in the world," he told AFP.

Cases of HIV-infection in Africa are projected to reach 17 million by 2000 from 15 million now, he said, adding: "I don't think it (the Asia-Pacific region) will ever reach the level of Africa."

In some African countries, 20 per cent of all sexually-active adults are infected.

The highest incidence in Asia is in Thailand and Cambodia where about two per cent of sexually-active adults had been tested positive for HIV, he said.

However, U.N. AIDS executive director Peter Piot warned that the situation in Asia was "most likely to dwarf" other regions if the situation was not contained.

Genff Mantly, U.N. AIDS country programme adviser, said Asia-Pacific hosts about half of the world's population and has "potentially more people who could become infected" with the AIDS virus.

Acquired immune deficiency syndrome kills by attacking the body's immune system.

It is caused by the human immune deficiency virus (HIV) which is spread mostly by sexual contact and other exchange of bodily fluids as in blood transfusions or sharing of syringes.

Mr. Piot said there was "striking proof that prevention works," citing the slowdown in the spread of AIDS in Australia and Thailand and the low rates of AIDS in the Philippines and Singapore.

He called on Asian countries "to shatter complacency and bring AIDS to the forefront of every nation and government" and "encourage grassroots action against the epidemic."

Mr. Ramos admitted that the "spectre of a possible AIDS epidemic brought about xenophobic reactions from many governments of the Asia-Pacific" at first, but noted that "the attitude has since changed."

Philippine AIDS sufferer Archie Rivera said he was hopeful the congress would benefit victims of the disease like himself.

"We sincerely hope that our national leaders would be moved to exercise the political will necessary to institutionalise measures for AIDS prevention and care," he said.

About 2,500 delegates from around the world are attending the five-day congress, which ends Wednesday.

## More than 250 cracks found in Chernobyl reactor

KIEV (AFP) — About 260 cracks have been detected in the cooling system of reactor number three at the Chernobyl nuclear plant in Ukraine, a spokesman for the plan has disclosed.

He said the cracks in the tubes of the cooling system had been found in time and there had been no leakage of contaminated water.

"No increase in radioactivity has been recorded," spokesman Mikhail Bogdanov said Friday.

He said "poor quality steel" or excessive metal fatigue could have caused the cracks.

"It will take at least two months to repair all that," he said, estimating the cost of the

repair work at between seven and 10 million hryvnas (\$3.8 and \$5.4 million).

Reactor number three is the only one of the plant's original four reactors still functioning. Reactor four exploded on April 26, 1986, in the worst civilian nuclear accident in history.

Reactor two was shut down in October 1991 after a fire and, last November, the Ukrainian government halted reactor number one under an agreement with the Group of Seven industrial nations which wants the whole plant closed down.

Ukraine derives almost 50 per cent of its electricity from its five nuclear plants: Chernobyl, Rivne, Khmelnytsky, Pivdeco Ukrainianska and Zaporizhzhia.

## South Africa Zulu road disaster kills 33

DURBAN, South Africa (R) — Thirty-three people on their way to a political rally burnt to death Saturday in a pre-dawn crash between a bus and a fuel tanker truck in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province, a transport official said.

The bus, carrying mainly women supporters of the Zulu leader, chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, collided with a stationary fuel-laden tanker truck which exploded on impact, said Transport Ministry spokesman Ranjeni Munusamy.

The victims were burnt beyond recognition and several were reduced to

ashes in the inferno which took rescuers over two hours to douse, he said. "Rescuers found five small skulls which are believed to be those of children," said Munusamy.

Mr. Buthelezi said he was shocked by the deaths. "It is with great shock and consternation that I've heard of the terrible accident that has taken place where more than 30 members of my party — women who were coming to attend the women's brigade annual conference in Ulundi — were killed," he said on state radio.

A spokesman for his Inkatha Freedom Party said a special fund would be set

up to provide for the families of the victims who were travelling to Ulundi, the heart of the predominantly Zulu province.

A nurse at a nearby hospital said up to 15 people had been treated for serious burns and shock. About five survivors with more serious injuries were taken 100 kilometres south to the Indian Ocean port city of Durban for specialised treatment.

National Transport Minister Mac Maharaj has declared a week of mourning for the deaths of 53 people, including the 33 killed in KwaZulu-Natal road accidents in the past six days.

## Italian woman weds in style after saving for 40 years

MESSINA, Sicily (R) — A 64-year-old Italian peasant who saved for 40 years for a fairy-tale wedding complete with caviar, champagne and a horse-drawn carriage

finally saw her dream come true Friday. Vittoria Chillemi, a farm worker, saved more than 50 million lire (\$29,000) to buy a white bridal gown worth 20

million lire and hire a 19th century coach drawn by two white horses so she could marry in style.

The mayor of Aotillo, a village in eastern Sicily, said he had cordoned off the main street and most of the 800 residents turned out to watch Chillemi wed 68-year-old Sebastiano Maccarone, to whom

she had become engaged at the age of 24.

The happy couple celebrated with a wedding banquet of caviar and champagne and were serenaded by violinists.

The happy couple celebrated with a wedding banquet of caviar and champagne and were serenaded by violinists.

## Indonesian smog unabated

JAKARTA (R) — Thick smog from raging bush fires covered large tracts of Indonesia Saturday as climatologists warned that the drought turning the nation's forests tinder-dry could continue for three months.

Meteorologists in Jakarta said smog covered 22 cities on Sumatra Island, in Kalimantan on Indonesia's side of Borneo Island, on Sulawesi Island and in the remote eastern province of Irian Jaya. A number of airports were closed due to poor visibility.

Malaysia said the smog also billowed back into the unhealthy haze in Kuala Lumpur and surrounding areas after a relative respite last week.

"Friday, scattered local rains fell in several places, such as the northern part of Sumatra, parts of Kalimantan, north of Sulawesi and Irian. But they were too small to lift the smog," said an official with Jakarta's National Meteorology Bureau.

"The main problem is the wind patterns, which keep changing," he said.

"We have expected heavy rains to fall this month because of the rain clouds from the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. In fact, dry winds coming from Australia are still dominant, which delay the rains," he said.

U.N. climate experts in Geneva said Friday that rains in Indonesia could be delayed far beyond the normal start of the monsoon due to the El Niño phenomenon, a periodic upwelling of warmer water in the Pacific Ocean which affects global weather patterns.

"In Indonesia, rains could be suppressed for the next three months," Mike Coughlan, a senior climate scientist at the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), told a news conference in Geneva.

"That is the worst-case scenario. We have to consider the worst-case scenario, but we

are not necessarily predicting that," Mr. Coughlan said.

Agricultural officials say the drought will affect production of key commodities in Indonesia such as rice, coffee, tea, cocoa and palm oil.

Political sources say authorities are also keeping a wary eye out for possible food riots, although officials say rice stocks are enough to see the country through the drought.

The annual rains normally start in September, with full monsoon rains the following month. But only scattered rain has fallen so far this season, and drought conditions prevail through much of the archipelago stretching 5,000 kilometres along the Equator.

Dense smoke from forest fires on Sumatra Island and in Kalimantan, particularly from huge deposits of burning peat spewing carbon into the air, has spread a choking, health-threatening smog over large areas of Southeast Asia.

The smog has triggered alarms in Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei and has spread as far as the Philippines and Thailand.

The drought has aggravated the fires, many started by plantation owners and small farmers clearing land for planting. It has also been blamed for more than 460 deaths from famine and disease among tribes in the remote, rugged jungles of Irian Jaya, where relief workers are flying in emergency supplies and medicines.

The Jakarta Post newspaper reported Saturday that the government vowed to take strong legal action against forest burners.

"The punishment against those who have committed burning practices will be heavy," Environment Minister Sarwono Kusumaatmadja was quoted as saying Friday.







Women candidates from various Amman districts meet with voters following a public debate held in Marka Oct. 20, 1997. Candidates from left are Fardos Masri, Laila Feisal, Toujan Feisal and Aysha Razem-Khawja (photo by Rana Hussein)

# Women running for Parliament face formidable obstacles, says survey

**A national survey conducted in Jordan last year by the Department of Statistics and the Oslo-based Institute for Applied Social Science, Fafo, found a strong societal barrier against women's participation in public life. Age A. Tiltens of Fafo reports:**

THIS BRIEF essay will draw mainly on statistical data from the 1996 Jordan Living Conditions Survey (JLCS) conducted by the Department of Statistics in cooperation with Fafo, Institute for Applied Social Science, Norway, and funded by UNICEF, IDRC and CIDA (Canada), and the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway. Among the many topics covered by the survey was public and political participation. One argument for dealing with political participation in a survey of living conditions is that such participation can be understood as a resource that, similar to such resources as economic wealth, education and health, can be transformed into welfare and thereby enhance the quality of people's lives. Besides, many people would regard the act of participation itself as crucial to their happiness and life satisfaction.

The survey was conducted during the months of February, March and April 1996. A representative national sample of 5,919 households was interviewed. Information was collected from 35,593 individuals. A total of 5,503 persons 15 years or older answered questions about public participation and attitudes regarding various issues.

### High-ranking public positions

When it comes to high-ranking public and political positions — we leave the survey for a moment — the situation for men versus that of women is even less balanced. In fact, until quite recently political space was nearly void of women. The first woman was elected to Parliament's 80-member Lower House in 1993. The same year King Hussein appointed two female senators to Parliament's 40-member Upper House. There have been one or two female ministers in each of the most recent governments. In the local elections of 1996, 10 women succeeded in winning seats in municipal councils, and one woman was elected as mayor for the first time in Jordan's history. Also, last year saw a breakthrough in another important domain — for the first time in the Kingdom's history a woman was appointed as a judge. As these examples clearly demonstrate, women are gradually obtaining more prominent public positions. However, changes are unfolding at a slow pace.

**Strong psychological barrier**

One of the chief explanations for the low number of females holding leading political and public posts is that the general population's attitudes and opinions (especially among men) about women's role in society may not be conducive to women entering public life. This argument is widespread among women activists throughout the Arab World. In Jordan, one activist and a candidate for the Nov. 4 parliamentary elections, Hiam Kalimat, asserts that women's political participation is obstructed by the lack of men's enthusiasm towards women participation.<sup>1</sup> Another activist and a member of Women's Resource Centre, Huda Tarawneh, states that: "Jordanian women still neither have trust nor confidence in women politicians."

The survey data basically confirm the thesis that there is a "psychological barrier" against female public and political participation in Jordan. About one-third of those interviewed are against having women in municipal councils (34 per cent), the national assembly or in the government (35 per cent). Nearly twice as many men (46 and 47 per cent) compared to women (24 and 25 per cent) are against women holding such positions. Furthermore, as many as 20 per cent of Jordanian men do not want women to vote. Only eight per cent of the women hold this view. Finally, many Jordanian men also do not like to see women represented or active in civic organisations. When asked if women should be allowed to take part in voluntary social activities (which presumably are among the least political of all organised activities) as many as 34 per cent of the men answered that women should not be allowed to do such a thing. Moreover, 10 per cent of the Jordanian women share this opinion.

### Older men more supportive

What explains people's attitudes to female public engagement?

Age has an effect on individuals' attitudes, but the effect is opposite in men to that of women. While women above the age of 50 are more conservative than younger women, older men are more progressive in their views about women's public roles than younger men. An amazing 57 per cent of men from 20 to 24 years of age obviously hope never to see female parliamentarians and ministers (again). For comparison, the figure for men aged 50 to 59 years is 39 per cent. Forty per cent of the men from 15 to 19 years will not even tolerate having women working for charities and the like. The level of opposition among 50 to 59 years old men is 11 percentage points lower.

The explanation for the particularly strong opposition to female public and political participation from the youngest generation of men is probably multifaceted. Part of the reason may be related to the fact that men's rule as patriarchs with near monolithic power slowly, but steadily, has been challenged for some time. Men no longer monopolise the public sphere, as women increasingly assert themselves in (higher) education, the labour market and other

## fields.

Men are not the sole breadwinners. This is evident from the fact that, according to this survey, 23 per cent of the women between the ages of 20 and 35 form part of the labour force. Although this figure is contrasted by 91 per cent for men, it could be sufficient to challenge young men and the traditional notion of "manhood." This is especially the case since unemployment is highest among the young. Consequently, men's, and particularly young men's, negative attitudes could derive from a feeling of threat from the opposite sex.

The above argument is supported by the finding that men in the workforce are more often opposed to female public involvement (voting and organisational membership) than are men outside the workforce. (Working women tend to have a more positive attitude to women's participation in political life.) This logic is strengthened further by analysis of working men's attitudes to women working outside of home and running their own business. Male labour force participants protest such female activities more than men outside the labour force. Young men's attitudes to female participation in political as well as civil society are paralleled with opposition to female inclusion in the labour

### Traditional gender roles

In social science literature one often finds a description of a Middle East in which men and women traditionally have belonged to two socially, economically and politically different spheres. Men were responsible for the public domain and outward-looking activities, the "foreign policy" of the household, while women were confined to the private domain of the family and house.

A quite recent work on Egyptian civil society and democratisation (Moheab Zaki's *Civil Society and Democratisation in Egypt: 1981-1994*) reveals that this public/private dichotomy not only belongs to the past, but that it is relevant for describing today's situation. The book concludes the section on the current situation of women stating that "the vast majority of Egyptian women, as a result of a strong cultural tradition of male dominance, tend to view their main role as centred in home and family, and tend to leave politics to the men-folk." This conclusion is echoed by a 1993 study by the Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan. According to this study 69 per cent of 2,250 Jordanians polled said that the main role of women is bringing up children and taking care of their hus-

***The results perhaps reflect mainly that Jordan's voluntary organisations, with the exception of the professional associations of doctors, lawyers, engineers and the like, have not been particularly politicised and that they have underpinned traditional social values***

market. They are more opposed to this than are older men.

## More years in school helps

Despite the heavy traditionalist and conservative elements in the educational system, more years in school have a positive effect on individuals' attitudes toward female political participation. This is true for both men and women, although the effect is most evident among men. Nonetheless, we should note that the difference in attitudes between men who have higher education and those who have only basic school is not that large. While 51 per cent of the latter group are against women as ministers or parliamentarians, as many as 39 per cent of the first group are opposed to having women in such political positions. We see that the difference is only 12 percentage points.

Likewise, further education has a positive effect on attitudes towards female involvement in associational life. Among those who have not completed any education 33 per cent of the men and 17 per cent of the women do not favour females in voluntary organisations. The figures, however, fall to 25 per cent and six per cent respectively among those with secondary education.

Men who participate in civil society have a more positive attitude towards female voting than other men. But, being a member of an organisation does not have any positive effect on men's view of women as political leaders, nor does organisational membership influence men's opinions of women's presence in associational life. Participation in organisations has no effect on women's attitudes. Thus, these findings do not lend support to those politicians, social scientists and others who underscore the educational, "civilising" and democratising aspects of civil society. The results perhaps reflect mainly that Jordan's voluntary organisations, with the exception of the professional associations of doctors, lawyers, engineers and the like, have not been particularly politicised and that they have underpinned traditional social values.

## bands.

Judith E. Tucker, a history professor with numerous publications on the status of Arab women, has noted that the public/private dichotomy in which politics belongs to the public world of men and family belongs to private world of women should be handled with care, "because it is too simplistic. According to her, women have never been entirely closed off from politics, but have used a multiplicity of techniques to influence and manipulate their way through life. "Still," she concludes, "there is much reason to believe that this informal road to power is gradually narrowing as the sphere of formal politics expands."

If we presume that what Tucker claims also holds true for Jordan, how should Jordanian women respond to these changed circumstances? In which way should women act to make their voices heard in the fields of formal politics? How can Jordanian women carve out a larger space for themselves in public life despite the formidable psychological hindrances — as well as the political and structural obstacles not treated in this essay — to their presence there?

As a foreigner who only has had the opportunity to visit Jordan on an irregular basis for the last four to five years, I am not in a position to give advice. I merely can share with the readers some observations, hoping that the survey's data provided here might aid the strategy formulation of the many women's committees and other forums and forces that support enhanced public and political roles for Jordanian women.

In the coming parliamentary elections 17 female candidates are up against some 550 male candidates, depressingly bad odds many would say. More so when survey data reveal that nearly one in every two men will not support a female candidate, no matter how well-suited she is for the job. Likewise, one in four women will not cast their votes in favour of a female candidate.

Yet, it seems to me that the best chances for female candidates, at least if they do not succeed in collecting strong tribal backing, is to opt for support from other women. To achieve that, a focus on issues of particular concern for women might be a sound policy.







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## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

### Gammoh: IMF admits reforms are not enough and sees suffering continuing without debt reduction

**\*\* FORMER FINANCE Minister Sami Gammoh** stressed the need to formulate a new national economic and social adjustment programme when the programme adopted in cooperation with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) ends in 1998. In a lecture at the Jerash Rotary Club, Mr. Gammoh said there are some issues that require high attention in a national programme such as rationalising government and public spending and consumption.

Noting that there are some imbalances that still exist in our society and economy, the former minister highlighted utilising national resources, such as water, energy and other natural resources, at the best method. He called for a revision of the educational system at all levels because what is taking place does not prepare the Jordanian citizen to the challenges and requirements of the new century. He said such a revision should be done soon with the participation of representatives from all economic and social sectors.

Mr. Gammoh also highlighted the importance of selecting and spending generously on technologies that suit the Kingdom and saw it necessary to continue upgrading new and old legislations such as the sales, income tax and customs laws. He emphasised the need for

measures to put an end to bureaucracy and routine and to adopt absolute transparency in all the law so that Jordan can truly be an attractive country for investment.

The former minister said special attention should be given to continue opening neighbouring markets to sell Jordanian products there in order to ease the suffering of our national industries in entering traditional and non-traditional markets.

Mr. Gammoh indicated that the national economic and social adjustment programme should stress the continuation of efforts to reach a suitable understanding with creditor countries to ease the Kingdom's debt burden.

He revealed that the IMF has acknowledged that without an easing of at least 50 per cent of the debt, Jordan's economy and people will continue to suffer even if all economic reforms, desirable or undesirable were implemented.

Mr. Gammoh concluded by pointing out that economic openness could create the "Jordanian economic miracle." He said that a solid foundation of property rights, creating a liberalised trade and financial market and imposing low customs and income tax and the free movement of goods, services and capital, can bring about the miracle he mentioned (Al Aswaj).

## Study: Japan, S. Korea lead way in car plant productivity

LONDON (AFP) — Japanese car plants, followed by a new breed of South Korean upstarts, lead the way in worldwide productivity, eclipsing output in Europe and the United States, a study has shown. The top three slots in terms of cars per employee go to Japanese factories, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) research group said in its first comparative audit of car plants around the world.

In fourth place came a site in South Korea, whose "manufacturers are fast catching up with Japan and now show average productivity ahead of Europe."

The EIU said in a statement that European plants were the least productive in the world's leading producer regions.

"This does not bode well for the European industry, which already suffers from substantial overcapacity and urgently needs to match its manning levels more closely to actual demand," the EIU said.

The study found that Honda's Suzuka plant in Japan was the world's most productive car factory last year, when employees produced almost 119 cars each. It was followed by Toyota Takaoka (106.4 cars per worker) and Mitsubishi Minatsumi (102 cars each).

Workers at a factory operated by the Kia producer in Asan Bay, South Korea, produced an average 94.3 cars each last year.

"South Korean manufacturers have been increasing productivity over the past decade and can now be counted as operating among

the world's most productive plants," the EIU said. Researchers said that a five and a half day working week there aided production levels. European factories, meanwhile, had a "poor performance in productivity." Just one European plant, General Motors' Eisenback plant in Germany, broke into the productivity top 10, with 70.4 vehicles per worker.

"Not only do the indigenous companies perform comparatively badly, but the Japanese transplants in the region do less well than their counterparts in North America," the study found.

Two U.S. factories made it into the top 10. Ford's Chicago and Atlanta plants, which both produced less than 78 cars per worker.

## Arab Gulf insurers face foreign competition

MANAMA (R) — Insurance firms in Gulf Arab states are likely to face strong foreign competition and mergers may be needed to help them meet the challenges, insurance executives said on Wednesday.

"Most of the Gulf countries have signed the GATT agreement which means that the markets in the Gulf have to be opened to international competition," the Executive Director of Gulf Union Insurance Group (GUIG), Percy Albert Sequeira, said.

"This will allow reinsurance companies from anywhere in the world to market insurance in the Gulf countries, naturally, the

local companies will be facing very strong competition from the international market," he said.

Mr. Sequeira was speaking on the sidelines of a two-day seminar attended by insurance executives from the Middle East, Asia and Europe. The seminar, "The Gulf Insurance Market in the 21st Century: Challenges of a Free Market," was organised by the Bahrain-based GUIG.

The general manager of Gulf Union Insurance and Risk Management in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, John Melcon called for mergers among small insurance companies in Gulf Arab states. "I am calling for mergers because mergers create better financial institutions with stronger capital bases."

Data provided to the seminar showed there were 178 insurance companies in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Kuwait in 1996 with total premium written of \$1.928 billion and \$1.111 billion total premium reinsured.

In 1996 there were 115 local and 63 foreign insurance firms operating in the Gulf. Saudi Arabia tops the list with 74 firms with total premiums of \$712 million, followed by the UAE with 19 firms with \$654 million in premiums, and Bahrain with eight firms with \$100 million in premiums.

"Bahrain is the only country in which the number of companies is not justified, by way of comparison with other Gulf Arab countries' total premium income and population," the general manager of the Bahrain-based Arab War Risks Insurance Syndicate, Muwaffaq Ridha, told the gathering.

Mr. Ridha said Saudi insurance firms were all registered outside the country, with the exception of the National Company for Cooperative Insurance "due to the fact that there is no legislation regulating the registration and supervision of insurance companies."

Most insurance firms in Gulf Arab states focus mainly on car insurance, with little attention being paid to health, marine and life insurance, analysts say. They estimate around 60 per cent of all insurance premiums in the Middle East are expatriated to Western reinsurers.

### Egypt to issue \$250-300 million bond this year

CAIRO (R) — Egypt will issue sovereign bonds worth between \$250 million to \$300 million before the end of the year to create a borrowing benchmark, the country's finance minister has said.

"Egypt is planning to issue sovereign bonds in the international market worth about \$250 million to \$300 million," Finance Minister Mohammed Al Gharib said.

## Citicorp to eliminate 7,500 jobs, or eight per cent of global workforce

NEW YORK (AP) — Citicorp, the second-largest banking business in the United States, has said it is eliminating 7,500 jobs worldwide over the next 12-18 months as it attempts to become more efficient in processing customer transactions.

The restructuring, which affects 8.3 per cent of a global workforce of some 90,000 people, will cost \$889 million. That resulted in a 45 per cent drop in earnings reported for the third quarter. Without the one-time charge, profit would have increased 14 per cent, Citicorp said.

The cuts are required to stay competitive, said John Reed, chairman of the

New York-based banking company with assets of \$300.38 billion. The parent of Citibank, which is second only to Chase Manhattan Corp. in U.S. banking, said the cuts are not directed at bank branches.

"Our customers, both consumer and corporate, demand that we continuously improve the ways we serve them, even at reduced prices," said a statement issued by Mr. Reed.

"We are responding to these conditions, which are not going away, by pursuing aggressive and focused business strategies in all markets, by giving central attention to quality and by realigning our business and processing structures to give them a global configuration," he added.

The processing centres are the back-office operations that perform such functions as handling customer statements, issuing credit cards, doing paperwork on mortgages and other loans and answering questions from customers.

With an operation that now extends to 98 countries, Citicorp wants to consolidate these centres, company spokesman John Morris said.

In all, it will eliminate 9,000 existing positions at centres being closed and add 1,500 positions at centres that will be expanded, a net loss of 7,500 jobs, Citicorp said.

Specifics on where the cuts would come were not disclosed.

## REUTERS The Business of Information

Prices as at 25/10/97 18:23

Major Currencies & Cross Rates	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	HKD	SGD	THB
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7735	0.6122	1.4632	122.15	7.7611	1.3363	20.0000
German Mark	0.5628	1.0000	0.4365	0.8250	65.54	4.7564	0.7823	13.6363
GB Sterling	1.6335	2.9038	1.0000	2.3967	199.61	126.21	3.2678	9.7169
Swiss Franc	0.8884	1.5512	0.4180	1.0000	80.33	5.6762	1.1524	16.6667
Japanese Yen	0.0082	1.4513	0.5008	1.1974	1.0000	11.385	14.117	163.41
Hong Kong Dollar	0.7188	1.2878	0.4408	1.0717	7.7611	1.0000	1.2585	15.8730
Singapore Dollar	0.7006	1.2500	0.4333	1.0845	7.7611	1.0000	1.1595	14.5333
Thai Baht	0.4899	0.8633	0.3033	0.7314	65.54	4.7564	0.8833	1.0000
Netherlands Guilder	0.1681	0.2980	0.1028	0.2458	20.51	0.2338	0.3182	33.6200

Middle Eastern Currencies

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	HKD	SGD	THB
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7735	0.6122	1.4632	122.15	7.7611	1.3363	20.0000
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.4730	0.1632	0.3903	32.5807	2.0000	0.3333	5.2083
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.4899	0.1693	0.4033	33.6200	2.0000	0.3333	5.2083
Kuwait Dinar	0.2723	0.4875	0.1688	0.4018	33.4167	2.0000	0.3333	5.2083
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.4875	0.1688	0.4018	33.4167	2.0000	0.3333	5.2083
Libyan Dinar	0.2723	0.4875	0.1688	0.4018	33.4167	2.0000	0.3333	5.2083
Egyptian Pound	0.2942	0.5206	0.1836	0.4375	35.7143	2.0000	0.3333	5.2083

Energy

Oil	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	HKD	SGD	THB
Brent	19.48	34.92	12.58	29.82	2313.50	150.00	23.12	360.00
West Texas	20.04	35.75	12.85	30.48	2380.00	150.00	23.12	360.00
Bonny	19.48	34.92	12.58	29.82	2313.50	150.00	23.12	360.00
Dubai	19.48	34.92	12.58	29.82	2313.50	150.00	23.12	360.00
UL Gas	201.00	360.00	125.00	300.00	2313.50	150.00	23.12	360.00

JOD Cross Rates

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	HKD	SGD	THB
US Dollar	0.708	1.250	0.433	1.084	87.50	5.625	0.875	13.75
German Mark	1.154	1.000	0.433	1.084	87.50	5.625	0.875	13.75
GB Sterling	0.398	0.694	1.000	2.397	199.61	126.21	3.268	9.717
Swiss Franc	0.888	1.551	0.418	1.000	80.33	5.676	1.152	16.667
Japanese Yen	0.119	0.119	0.119	0.119	1.000	11.385	14.117	163.41
Hong Kong Dollar	0.719	1.288	0.441	1.072	7.761	1.000	1.259	15.873
Singapore Dollar	0.701	1.250	0.433	1.084	7.761	1.000	1.159	14.533
Thai Baht	0.490	0.863	0.303	0.731	65.54	4.756	0.883	1.000
Netherlands Guilder	0.168	0.298	0.103	0.246	20.51	0.234	0.318	33.620

Source: Central Bank of Jordan

Main Equity Indices

Index	Value	% Chg	Value	% Chg	Value	% Chg	Value	% Chg
New York DOW JONES	7715.41	-132.38	7638.01	-7638.01	7638.01	-7638.01	7638.01	-7638.01
New York S&P 500	941.84	-0.05	941.84	-0.05	941.84	-0.05	941.84	-0.05
London FT-SE 100	4970.2	-21.3	4970.2	-21.3	4970.2	-21.3	4970.2	-21.3
Tokyo NIKKEI 225	17363.78	-212.19	17363.78	-212.19	17363.78	-212.19	17363.78	-212.19
Paris CAC 40	2849.03	-7.84	2849.03	-7.84	2849.03	-7.84	2849.03	-7.84
Frankfurt DAX	4050.37	-73.81	4050.37	-73.81	4050.37	-73.81	4050.37	-73.81

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CHARTERED BANK SHARAHAT

TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607175

ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 25/10/1997

PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	QTY	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
346,000	245,000	ARAB BANK	15.2	1.21	2	33050	330.00	330.50	.50+
2,340	1,680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	2	0.00	11	4121	7600	2.94	1.84
3,600	2,760	BANK OF JORDAN	6.2	0.00	13	2650	7820	2.95	2.85
1,190	890	MID. EAST INV. BK.	73.6	0.00	1	1000	1120	1.13	1.12
2,600	2,150	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	9.9	6.33	4	3000	12300	2.49	2.50
2,200	1,600	THE HOUSING BK.	15.1	3.83	14	15002	75871	5.03	5.06
4,180	2,440	JOR. KOWAT BANK	11.2	0.00	2	300	944	3.12	3.15
1,050	740	JOR. GUFP BANK	9.5	9.21	2	700	532	3.76	3.76
3,970	3,450	ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	18.5	0.00	2	360	360	3.97	3.97
4,050	3,430	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	14.4	3.38	13	12850	45440	3.50	3.55
3,900	3,080	JOR. INV. FID. BANK	24.6	0.00	9	10783	41488	3.84	3.83
1,900	890	BEIT AL-AMAL (BETEXNA)	6	16.48	2	600	546	.92	.92

BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 237.22 %CHG: +0.21

2,200 1,820 ARAB LIFE INSUR. 8.1 4.78 1 250 623 1.99 2.09 .10+

INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 115.24 %CHG: +0.49

2,050 1,550 JOR. ELECTRIC PWR. 9.0 5.35 13 5351 10015 1.88 1.87 .01-

1,010 820 REAL ESTATE INV. 12.8 6.52 1 1000 920 .92 .92 -

8,160 6,700 AL-BAYT AL-AMAL 14.4 6.22 13 1000 7951 7.80 8.04 .24+

1,140 900 KAWAT EDUCATION 11.9 0.00 5 7500 6975 .92 .93 .01+

2,230 1,630 UNIFIED CO. 8.2 6.36 10 2750 4766 1.75 1.73 .02-

.950 640 UNION LAND DEV. 9.0 0.00 1 250 188 .74 .75 .01+

SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 111.85 %CHG: +0.19

1,050 930 ATANKER 0.00 0.00 3 2850 2850 1.01 1.00 .01-

4,450 3,030 JOR. CEMENT FACT. 21.9 3.38 8 16112 52916 3.28 3.25 .03-

7,050 5,550 ARAB POTASH CO. 14.2 3.28 5 5350 32425 6.02 6.10 .08+

1,410 1,050 WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES 9.2 9.43 1 300 318 1.06 1.06 -

4,700 3,040 ARAB PHARM. MANF. 11.8 4.68 7 1794 7667 4.29 4.27 .02-

1,750 1,120 JOR. PIPES MANFCT. 13.6 7.27 1 500 550 1.12 1.10 .02-

6,900 5,000 ARAB CEMENT DTOR. 19.9 4.82 1 200 1300 6.50 6.50 -

1,480 1,050 RAFFIA INDUSTRIES 9.0 0.00 5 1650 213



# Final ingredient added to battle for world championship

JEREZ, Spain (AFP) — The final ingredient for the most explosive finish to a Grand Prix season in recent history was added here on Saturday when Jacques Villeneuve and Michael Schumacher both clocked identical times to line up on the front row.

The 26-year-old Canadian was given pole spot because he managed to get his time in first in one of the most incredible qualifying sessions ever.

Adding to the drama was Villeneuve's teammate Heinz-Harald Frentzen who also had the same time as the two drivers' battling for the world championship.

Schumacher, who leads the championship by one point, will take his third drivers' crown if both drivers fail to finish the race amid fears of another controversial first-corner collision.

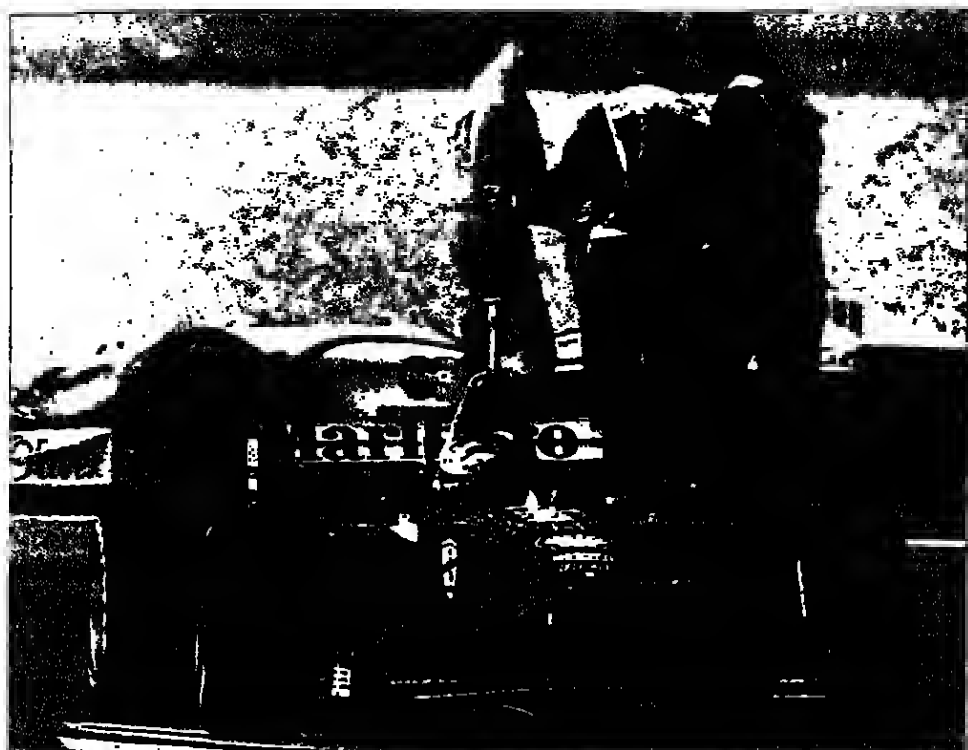
Villeneuve, celebrating the 13th and possibly most important pole of his career, said of the timings: "It's surprising, but it's the best way to finish the last qualifying when you are fighting for the championship."

"What I was surprised about is that I set the time on my first run. But pole is vital as it's a question of who gets to the finish in front of the other guy."

Schumacher said: "When I saw the times on my computer read-out I couldn't believe it. You cannot get closer — it just shows the competition is at a very high level."

"I wanted a head-to-head with Jacques and that's what I've got. We are going to have a very good race and the first corner will be interesting."

"But what happens there will depend on who gets the best start because here it doesn't really matter if you are first or second on the grid."



Ferrari's Michael Schumacher drives to make the second best time for the starting grid as the car of his brother Ralf is removed from the track after coming off October 25 at the Jerez racetrack during practice sessions for the European Grand Prix. (Reuters photo)

Defending champion Damon Hill could also mark his last race for Arrows and as world champion in style after qualifying an excellent fourth fastest just .058 of a second off pole.

A sign of how tense the battle has become came earlier in the day when an upset Villeneuve angrily confronted Eddie Irvine.

The clash happened after Villeneuve, who was on a flying lap during the unofficial practice session, was forced to slow down when he was blocked by the Ulsterman.

The Canadian, clearly annoyed, rushed to the Ferrari pits at the end of the session to let Irvine know what he thought of him in no uncertain terms as he swore at him.

As Villeneuve stormed back to the Williams garage, Irvine got out of his

car with a broad grin on his face and smiled at some of the Ferrari mechanics.

"This just shows he is getting wound up. I didn't see him in the mirrors," said Irvine.

Villeneuve, still angry at Irvine, said later: "That's the fourth time he's done that to me in the last two days."

"It's a kind of psychological game. It just shows to what point Eddie is prepared to go to help Michael win the championship."

"Michael has said he wants a clean race with no bad things. I just hope he will be able to do that."

Villeneuve has to finish ahead of Schumacher and in the points in Sunday's European Grand Prix to take the title, but fears a collision with either his German rival or Irvine could wreck his championship hopes.

Earlier this week Villeneuve admitted he was concerned about Irvine.

"You never know what to expect from Eddie," said the Canadian when asked if he thought the Ulsterman might try and force him off the track.

Irvine successfully blocked Villeneuve during the last race in Japan and has vowed to do everything he can to help Schumacher take the title for the third time.

Saturday morning's confrontation is a sign that the pressure is beginning to tell and increase the chances of a collision deciding the destination of the drivers' title.

Schumacher has pledged to keep the contest clean, hoping to avoid a repeat of the controversial climax to the 1994 campaign when he took the title by one point after colliding with Damon Hill.

## Douglas heads list to challenge Lewis

LONDON (AFP) — James "Buster" Douglas, the man who stunned Mike Tyson to become the undisputed world heavyweight champion in 1990, is heading the list of contenders to challenge Britain's Lennox Lewis for his WBC crown.

Douglas and fellow American Lou Savarese are the opponents most favoured by Lewis's American cable network Home Box Office for a February 21 defence in Las Vegas.

The Lewis camp is currently trying to seal a unification deal with WBA champion Evander Holyfield, should he overcome IBF holder Michael Moorer on November 8.

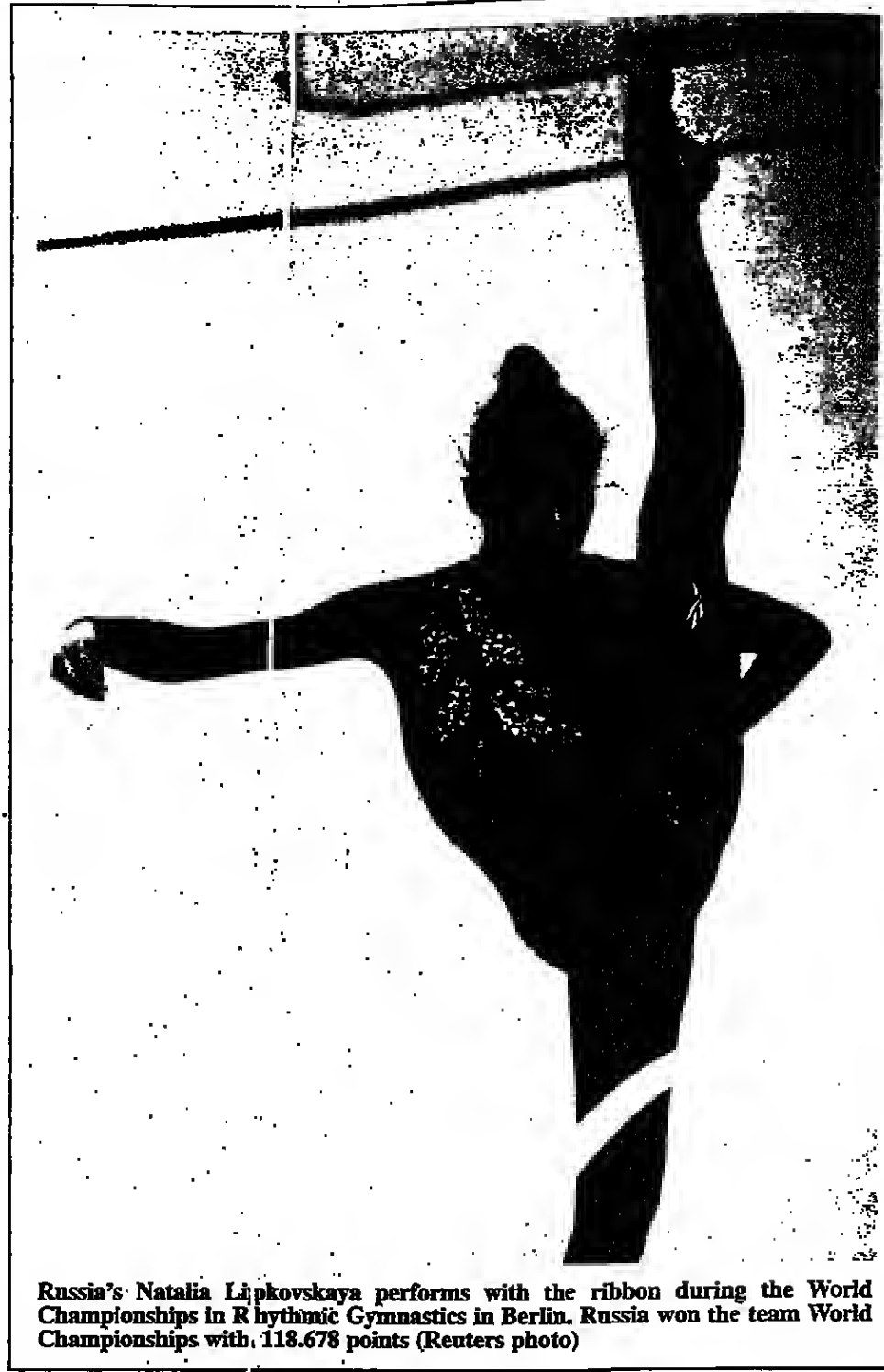
But that could be delayed until later in 1998 if Holyfield is ordered to meet the winner of a WBA title final eliminator between Orlin Norris and another of the leading contenders between May and the end of June.

Lewis's manager Frank Maloney said: "I think Douglas is a good fight for Lennox. There is still a mystique surrounding him after his victory over Mike Tyson. He beat Tyson when everyone had him as a major underdog. He's the man who beat the man."

Douglas wrecked the invincibility of Tyson in Tokyo in 1990, but has come back after six years out of boxing to successfully relaunch his career.

Douglas said recently: "I'm the world champion, I'm ready to take on Lennox Lewis and take the title back to America. His opponents don't stand up to him but I will, baby."

"There would be nothing but thumping, and thumping, beautiful execution, and I'm ready to take him on an win my championship back."



Russia's Natalia Lipkovskaya performs with the ribbon during the World Championships in Rhythmic Gymnastics in Berlin. Russia won the team World Championships with 118.678 points (Reuters photo)

## Marlins on brink of Series title

MIAMI (AFP) — Tantalizingly close to a World Series title, the Florida Marlins are finding it harder to concentrate on finishing the job.

The National League champions, formed in 1992 and boosted by a \$90 million talent infusion this season, returned home Friday with a 3-2 lead over Cleveland in the best-of-seven baseball finals.

Kevin Brown, the winning pitcher on the Marlins staff, tries to wrap up the title in game six here Saturday against Cleveland's Chad Ogea.

"We're going back home. We have our ace. Things look real good," Florida's Darren Daulton said.

The Indians, who are 7-0 in even-numbered playoff games this year, must win to force a seventh game here Sunday.

After Florida won game five 8-7 on Thursday, Marlins officials began making plans for a victory parade. Florida players even admitted they are having a hard time controlling their excitement with a title so near.

"I'm trying to keep my emotions down," Marlins slugger Gary Sheffield said. "I know it's going to be one of the biggest moments of my life. I'm trying not to just jump over the ceiling."

"We can't worry about winning two," Cleveland batting hero Marquis Grissom said. "We have to play flat out. There's no tomorrow. They beat us twice in Cleveland. I don't see any reason we can't do the same here."

Florida's Moises Alou, who drove in four runs and scored twice in game five, catches himself when he starts to look ahead too much.

"It's big to be up, but it's not going to be easy. We have another big game to play," the Dominican said. "I'm not thinking about it until it happens. When it

happens it's going to be unbelievable."

The Indians are on the brink of a third consecutive heartbreak, having lost the 1995 Series to Atlanta in six games and been ousted in the first playoff round last year after having the winningest season in baseball.

A Series loss to the Marlins could put Cleveland with American football's Buffalo Bills on the list of perennial bridesmaids to never capture the grand prize.

"This is a never-say-die team. This team will not fall over and die," Indians' pitcher Orel Hershiser said.

Cleveland twice faced elimination against the New York Yankees in the first round this year only to battle back to win and oust the reigning Series champions.

"Nothing is impossible. We have done it before," Cleveland shortstop Omar Vizquel said. "I don't think many people thought we

would even be in the World Series to begin with."

"And the Marlins have pressure, too. They have to come up with a big game at home. We have to play our best baseball in the next game."

Neither team practiced Friday. Florida manager Jim Leyland, who has spent 34 years in the sport to reach his first World Series, said if his club is not ready after playing since March, they never would be.

Brown was rocked for 10 hits and six runs in six innings to lose game two here, with the Indians slapping singles through a Marlin defense often spread because Cleveland had runners on base.

"I didn't throw the ball that badly but I felt like I could throw better," Brown said. "My plan is to get them to hit ground balls to people. You have to make good pitches and hope things bounce your way."

## Paris Indoor draw does Sampras no favours

PARIS (AFP) — World number-one Pete Sampras was done no favours by Paris Mayor Jean Tiberi at Friday's draw for the \$2.5 million Paris Indoor Open which will open at the Bercy Stadium on Monday.

For the first names the French politician drew out of the hat as the American's first match opponents were three-times champion Boris Becker and experienced Australian Mark Woodforde.

Sampras could hardly have been expecting such a tough start.

With several top players dropping out of the event because of injury — among them Goran Ivanisevic and Mark Philippoussis — Sampras had been hoping for a kinder passage.

And even if he survives his opening clash, the top seed then has to win difficult possible shoot-outs against the likes of Petr Korda, Tim Henman and Thomas Muster before a scheduled semi-final against either high-serving Greg Rusedski or last year's finalist Yevgeny Kafelnikov.

Becker, 29 and the winner of the event in 1986, 1989 and 1992, will be determined to celebrate his last appearance in Paris with some spectacular tennis. And he will not be in the mood to how out quietly. But he will need to keep his concentration against Woodforde in front of the notoriously unruly Paris

crowd. Last year the German stormed off court complaining about the crowd behaviour after crashing in his first match to Carlos Moya of Spain. He later said it had been like "playing in front of a zoo."

Sampras, the 1996 winner of the world's richest indoor tournament and one of three players already safely qualified for the ATP's end-of-season Championships in Hamburg (the others are Michael Chang and Patrick Rafter), will be bidding for his first tournament success since winning the Grand Slam Cup in Munich last month.

He was beaten for only the tenth time in 56 matches this season in Stuttgart earlier this week when he bowed out to Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands in straight-sets.

Although Sampras remains the title favourite — many see Britain's big-serving 24-year-old Rusedski as the player to beat.

The United States Open finalist, who is seeded fourth, is certainly the opponent nobody wants to face. His recent string of successes have sent him charging up the rankings and brought him the title in Basel and a finalist's berth in Vienna.

Rusedski opens his first-ever campaign inside the grass-walled stadium with a second-round clash against either American Todd



Pete Sampras

Martin or Jan Siemerink of the Netherlands. And he should also arrive in the French capital well rested after an early second-round loss to rising German star Nicolas Pietrangeli in Stuttgart this week.

His compatriot, Tim Henman, who was just one place away from claiming one of the 16 seeded spots, opens against poetry-loving Moroccan Hicham Arazi.

And if he comes through that test he will face a second-round clash against tenth-seeded Alex Corretja of Spain.

In the other-half of the draw, second-seed Michael Chang could face last year's winner Thomas Enqvist in the last-sixteen, while French Davis Cup players Cedric Pioline and Lionel Roux were drawn for a first-round showdown.

Guillaume Raoux, another member of the unsuccessful French Davis Cup squad that was eliminated from the world group by Belgium last month, faces Belgian number-one Filip Dewulf, while Fabrice Santoro, another home player, takes on Magnus Larsson of Sweden in a bid to reach a second-round berth against 14th seeded Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands.

### GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSH

#### A DASH OF DECEPTION

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH		EAST	
♠ A 8 6	♣ Q 9	♠ K Q 10 9 2	♣ J 2
♥ A K 6 4	♦ Q J 9 3	♥ J 2	♦ 9 7 5 9
WEST		SOUTH	
♠ J 7	♣ 10 8 7 6	♠ 4 5	♣ 10 8 6 4
♥ 7 5 3	♦ 10 9	♥ 10 9	♦ 9 8
♦ J 10 2	♠ A K 8 7	♠ 10 4 2	

The bidding:  
SOUTH: 1♣, 2♦, 3♦, 4♦, 5♦, 6♦, 7♦, 8♦, 9♦, 10♦, 11♦, 12♦, 13♦, 14♦, 15♦, 16♦, 17♦, 18♦, 19♦, 20♦, 21♦, 22♦, 23♦, 24♦, 25♦, 26♦, 27♦, 28♦, 29♦, 30♦, 31♦, 32♦, 33♦, 34♦, 35♦, 36♦, 37♦, 38♦, 39♦, 40♦, 41♦, 42♦, 43♦, 44♦, 45♦, 46♦, 47♦, 48♦, 49♦, 50♦, 51♦, 52♦, 53♦, 54♦, 55♦, 56♦, 57♦, 58♦, 59♦, 60♦, 61♦, 62♦, 63♦, 64♦, 65♦, 66♦, 67♦, 68♦, 69♦, 70♦, 71♦, 72♦, 73♦, 74♦, 75♦, 76♦, 77♦, 78♦, 79♦, 80♦, 81♦, 82♦, 83♦, 84♦, 85♦, 86♦, 87♦, 88♦, 89♦, 90♦, 91♦, 92♦, 93♦, 94♦, 95♦, 96♦, 97♦, 98♦, 99♦, 100♦.

Opening lead: King of ♠.

Some plays will fool the average declarer but not the expert. Be sure of the caliber of your opponent before you commit yourself to an extraordinary play.

North-South were playing weak two-bids, and South's hand was classic for such action. North had a very good hand, but could not be sure partner's hearts would produce six fast tricks. With only a single stopper in spades, a ruff to four

hearts seemed to be a better choice than three no trump.

The defense started by cashing the king and ace of clubs, on which East completed an echo by first dropping the six, then the five. A third club was led, ruffed by East with the deuce. The king of spades was returned, taken by dummy's ace, and declarer immediately led dummy's high club. What should East do, and why?

The natural tendency is to ruff. Declarer will overruff and claim the rest of the tricks, since the losing spade can be discarded on a high diamond.

Instead, East should wonder why declarer led a club at the fifth trick. South surely held the ace-king of trumps, so if South needed to discard a loser on the high club, trumps could have been exhausted first. Ergo, declarer had no side-suit loser and wanted East to ruff, to clarify the trump situation.

At the table, a quick-thinking East promptly discarded a spade. Declarer did the same, then ruffed the spade and now was faced with a losing option. Since East's failure to ruff suggested that West had started with four trumps headed by the jack, South led a trump to the final Down one.

TODAY AT	<b>PHILADELPHIA "1"</b> Kurt Russell ... in <b>ESCAPE FROM L.A.</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	<b>PHILADELPHIA "2"</b> Alicia Silverston & Amy Heckerling ... in <b>CLUELESS</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	<b>PLAZA</b> Tommy Lee Jones & Will Smith ... in <b>MEN IN BLACK</b> Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	<b>CONCORD</b> Concord "1" Geena Davis & Samuel Jackson ... in <b>THE LONG KISS GOOD NIGHT</b> (12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30) Concord "2" <b>TOO HOT TO HANDLE</b> Shows: 3:30, 6:00 only	<b>GALLERIA 1</b> ABDOUN Nicholas Cage ... in <b>CON AIR</b> Shows: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45	<b>GALLERIA 2</b> ABDOUN Van Damme ... in <b>DOUBLE TEAM</b> Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	<b>Hisham Yanes Theatre</b> TEL: 625155 Watch out for the new play <b>THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SERVICE OF PEOPLE</b> Starring Hisham Yanes and Amal Dabbas
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## SPORTS IN BRIEF

### Reading leave it late

LONDON (AFP) — A late equaliser from Linvoy Primus after the seeding off of the visiting goalkeeper, earned Reading a 3-3 draw against Nottingham Forest in Friday's Division One clash. Forest had looked to be cruising to an easy victory when they took a 2-0 lead but the game was transformed when referee John Brandwood sent Forest keeper Dave Beasant off for a professional foul on Martin Williams. Beasant, who was replaced in the visitors' goal by centre-half Steve Chettle, later accused referee John Brandwood of "messing about with people's careers."

### Beams extends run

MELBOURNE (AFP) — Unseeded New Zealander Philippa Beams continued her giant-killing run in the women's Australian Open Squash Championship here on Saturday, fighting back from 2-0 down to beat England's world number three Cassie Jackson 4-9, 4-9, 9-4, 9-1, 9-7 in just under an hour. The 27-year-old world number 14 from Auckland said: "I expected to get done in three games but in the third game I decided to play in front and play short, which seemed to work." Beams, whose win sends her into the semi-finals, had already removed England's sixth seed Fioora Geaves in the first round. World number five and local favourite Carol Owens meanwhile lost an all-Australian battle against Liz Irving, Brisbane's fifth-seeded Irving coming through 2-9, 9-0, 2-9, 9-7, 9-4.

### West Ham say no to Abou

CANNES, France (AFP) — Cannes striker Samassi Abou, set to sign for West Ham of the English Premiership, will not be swapping a relegation battle on the Mediterranean for Upton Park after all, it emerged Friday. Abou was to have joined the Hammers for some \$600,000, but the London club decided after he had completed his medical they only wanted to pay half that amount as well as a lower wage than that originally mooted. Cannes general manager Eric Goiran said. As well as welcoming Abou back, Cannes have also agreed to pay Sio of Switzerland around a million dollars for experienced striker Marco Grassi.

### Schulz pulls out of Francis fight

BERLIN (AFP) — German heavyweight Axel Schulz saw his hopes of making a fourth bid for the world title dashed Friday when a back problem forced him to withdraw from a bout with Britain's Julius Francis. The bout had been set to go ahead here on November 15 but Schulz, 28, said a painful nerve had forced him to pull out. "I can't even train. I'm very disappointed. When you want to become world champion every bout is important and I really could have done without an injury just now," the German said. In his previous cracks at the world title, Schulz failed against George Foreman, Francois Botha and Michael Moorer.

## Sydney Olympic gold from site of 1st Aussie gold rush

SYDNEY (AFP) — The bullion needed for the 1,000 gold medals at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games will come from the site of Australia's first gold rush, Olympics Minister Michael Knight said Saturday.

The historic Ophir goldfields in central-western New South Wales state will provide 6,000 grams (210 ounces) of gold worth 150,000-200,000 Australian dollars (\$108,000-144,000).

"Orange, Blayney and Cabonne councils have all decided to make us an offer that we could not refuse, to supply the gold for the medals at the Sydney Games at their own expense," Knight said.

"It includes gold coming from the first-ever, workable, payable gold mine in Australia."

"We're delighted to endorse that proposal subject to working out some details with the councils as to the way in which they can receive credit for it."

The Ophir goldfields were discovered in 1851. They yield nuggets "bigger than dust."

# Krajicek moves into Eurocard final against Korda

STUTTGART (AFP) — Richard Krajicek began narrowing his long-odd chances of a place in the season tennis finale as he overhauled Swede Jonas Bjorkman 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 on Saturday to book his second career trophy match at the \$2.3 million Eurocard Open.

Former Wimbledon winner Krajicek and the 1995 champion here, seeded one hour 27 minutes to continue the run of success this week which has taken him to wins over last year's finalists, Pete Sampras and Boris Becker.

The Dutch 16th seed stands a decent chance of improving his possibilities for reaching the eight-man World Championships in Hanover, which starts in a fortnight.

He will play Czech Petr Korda for the Mercedes Super 9 title Sunday.

Veteran Korda, whose tennis is flourishing as he nears the age of 30, knocked out third seed Patrick Rafter without ceremony 6-4, 7-6 (7/3).

Korda, with seven career titles but none this year, improved to 3-1 against the 25-year-old Australian in their series.

Korda's best results this year have been finals in Halle on grass and in Washington on hardcourt. He is playing Stuttgart for the fifth time and lost to Stefan Edberg in the 1992 finals.

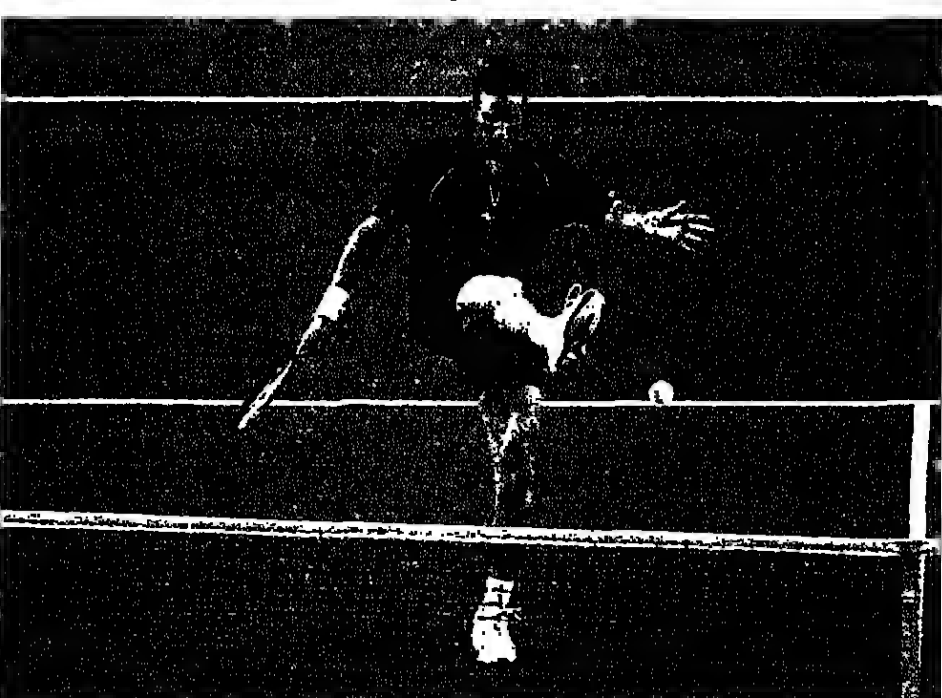
The defeat in one hour 29 minutes will not affect Rafter's participation at next month's event in Hanover along with Pete Sampras and Michael Chang, who have also already qualified.

But had Rafter won the tournament this week, he would have stood a chance of overhauling Chang on second.

"There are only two more



Petr Korda from the Czech Republic celebrates his semifinal victory over Patrick Rafter from Australia at the ATP Indoor Championships in Stuttgart, October 25. Korda defeated Rafter 6-4 7-6 (Reuters photo)



Patrick Rafter from Australia kicks the ball during his semifinal match against Petr Korda from the Czech Republic at the ATP Indoor Championships in Stuttgart, October 25. Korda defeated Rafter 6-4 7-6 (Reuters photo)

spots to go," said the disappointed Queenslander. "I'm getting closer, though I'm not there yet. Maybe I will, maybe I won't."

Rafter said that a knee problem which had bothered him a bit in the wake of his U.S. Open victory is fine at the moment. "It was giving me trouble early in the week, but in the last two matches it has been great. I haven't felt a thing."

Korda, who is from the same tennis generation as the retired Edberg and the semi-retired Boris Becker, said that he is nowhere near to ending his own career.

"I don't know how long I'll play, but I realise that I can play tennis and beat the No. 1 in the world (a fourth-round win over Pete Sampras at the U.S. Open)."

"I'm enjoying tennis and working harder than ever. My motivation has never been so high. My goal is to get back into the Top 10."

"I'm still young inside. Backer and Edberg turned pro when they were around 15 or 16, I didn't do it until I was 19. I haven't played as much as they had."

Korda won 80 per cent of his first-serve points and had 30 winners during the match against Rafter.

Bjorkman, a U.S. Open semi-finalist, dropped the first set through one break for Krajicek. But the Swede's form underwent a rapid improvement in the second set.

Bjorkman broke for 2-0 when Krajicek missed a straightforward volley. The Swede earned a 4-1 lead and eventually drew even at a set apiece.

The third set stayed on serve until Krajicek broke for 3-1 and served out the match five games later.

## Judge accuses Venables of lying on oath

LONDON (AFP) — Australian football coach Terry Venables was condemned on Friday by a senior English judge who accused him of lying on oath to try and persuade a jury his friend was innocent. Former bankrupt Eddie Ashby was jailed for four months by the court for helping Venables manage English football giants Tottenham Hotspur and a London nightclub in "flagrant" breach of a bankruptcy ban.

But despite the judge accusing Venables of "deliberately and dishonestly" trying to mislead a jury, the former England coach has escaped possible prosecution for perjury.

The judge said those trying the disgraced

businessman had seen through the "transparent charade" of a defence which attempted to put the blame on Tottenham chairman Alan Sugar instead.

But soon after Knightsbridge Crown Court judge Timothy Pootius's hard-hitting remarks, it emerged that no further action was contemplated against Venables, who is also the owner of first division Portsmouth.

A Crown Prosecution spokesman said: "The judge can choose to refer papers to the police. It may be something that the police decide to investigate."

However, the judge's clerk said if he had planned such a move he would have announced it in open court.

## Italy's Compagnoni wins Super G

TIGNES, France (AFP) — Italy's Deborah Compagnoni, defending World Cup giant slalom champion, streaked to victory here Saturday in the World Cup season opener, finishing in 2min 24.84sec.

Martina Ertl of Germany was second almost two seconds off the pace, crossing the line in 2:26.72 ahead of Sweden's Martina Fortkord, who timed 2:27.30.

Switzerland's Karin Roten, silver medalist at the last world championships, placed fourth with last year's race winner Germany's Katja Seizinger surprisingly well out of the running in

fifth, four seconds behind Compagnoni.

"It really makes up for last year, when I lost the opening race at Soldeu after making a bad mistake on the second run," beamed Compagnoni after her win.

This time, the champion was fastest out of the blocks in both runs and she explained: "The first run was very fast, the second very good technically. But I felt great during both."

Compagnoni was over in trouble having gained more than a one-second advantage over Seizinger in the first run and then



Italy's Deborah Compagnoni in action to win the opening giant slalom of the Alpine ski World Cup race in Tignes, French Alps. Martina Ertl of Germany was second and Martina Fortkord of Sweden third (Reuters photo)

beaten Ertl by more than half a second. Ertl had the consolation

of heading the provisional overall standings having placed fourth in Friday's

parallel slalom. The German has 130 points to Compagnoni's 114.

## Amman Little League

Tots Division 1990-1992 (all are winners)

Al Sadat vs Klim McDonald vs Atro

Juniors One Division 1982-1989

Al Jawhara 1 vs Nokia 1  
Varta 2 vs IPCO 0  
Standings: Nokia 12 points; Varta 10 points; Al Jawhara 7 points; IPCO 3 points

Juniors Two Division 1986-1987

RJ 0 vs Intervet 0  
Porsche 0 vs RMCCS 1  
Standings: Intervet 14 points; RMCCS 10 points; Porsche 8 points; RJ 1 points

Mids Division 1984-1985

Arby's 1 vs Amigo Nabil 2  
Reinert 2 vs Dune's Club 3  
Arby's 3 vs Reinert 2 (played Thur Oct 23rd)  
Standings: Dune's Club 13 points; Amigo Nabil 11 points; Arby's 6 points; Reinert 4 points

Senior Division 1981-1983

Zalatio 4 vs Jordan Insurance 1  
Coffee Break 2 vs Coaches 3  
Standings: Zalatio 10 points; Jordan Insurance 4 points; Coffee Break 3 points

\* Cup games will start on Fri. Nov. 7th & end on Fri. Nov. 21st  
On Fri. Oct. 31, HRH Princess Basma will officially inaugurate "The Queen Zein Al Shara Complex," Amman Little League Sports Centre at 11:00 a.m.

JORDAN TIMES  
FAX: 696183

## Bergkamp keeps card-happy refs busy

LONDON (AFP) — Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger believes Dennis Bergkamp, the Premiership's outstanding player of the season so far, has become a "trophy" for card-happy, unpredictable referees.

Bergkamp signs off for Arsenal against Aston Villa on Sunday before a three-match ban that will keep the 11-goal striker out of action for most of November.

Arsenal lead the Premiership by one point with the season almost a third over, but Wenger fears Arsenal's bid for their first title since 1991 could be jeopardized if Bergkamp continues to fall foul of referees.

Frenchman Wenger says it is barely believable that Bergkamp has collected five yellow cards in just eleven games.

"What some referees here will do is so unpredictable. Sometimes you have the feeling Dennis is a trophy for them now," said

Bergkamp.

"He is so angel and maybe has deserved one or two of his yellow cards but he is never booked for dissent and rarely for tackling. 'Maybe it is because he complains about the treatment he receives from defenders and the referee becomes fed up with hearing it."

"But I know he has a lot of frustration and feels he is not protected enough." After the clash with Villa on Sunday, Bergkamp will not be available for Premiership duty until the home game with Liverpool on November 30 — although Wenger plans to play him in the League Cup, which has a separate disciplinary system, against Coventry on November 18.

Bergkamp's strike partner Ian Wright insisted: "Dennis has been very unlucky to get five cards. Even when he complains to the referee about people holding him,

pulling his shirt or getting at him from behind he does it

in a calm way and so it can't be dissent."

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# Kabariti: Netanyahu is driving Mideast back into old cycle of violence

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is leading the Middle East to the old cycle of violence and hostilities, ruining any chances of success of regional peace negotiations, former Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti has declared. "The Middle East peace process is bogged down. What is left are broken pieces rather than a coherent piece, thanks to Netanyahu," Mr. Kabariti was quoted as saying in an interview with a Turkish newspaper Wednesday.



Former Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti (J.T. file photo)

Mr. Kabariti, now chairman of the Jordan-Kuwait Bank, was in Istanbul with a Jordanian business delegation for a joint meeting of Turkish-Jordanian Business Council. "The Israeli leader is a man who cheats and proceeds. He does not generate any trust, which is the basis of peace-making," he told the English language daily Turkish Daily News.

"Netanyahu does not believe in the peace process," Mr. Kabariti, who served as foreign minister in 1995 and as prime minister from early 1996 until March 1997, charged.

with Israel that allow for joint military exercises, exchange of intelligence and cooperation in fighting terrorism.

"In the Middle East, perceptions are more important than facts. The perception among Arabs is that the Turkish-Israeli defence accord is an unwarranted acceleration in military relations that is causing a great deal of alarm," he said.

"Arabs look at political relations in terms of love affairs," he noted. "They have always admired Turkey for its sympathy and support of Arab causes. Now if Turkey smiles at someone else — Israel — we see this as a betrayal."

In remarks he made earlier to the joint meeting of the Jordanian-Turkish Business Council, Mr. Kabariti blamed Mr. Netanyahu's policies for taking back the peace process to "square one."

"Sadly, we are not so optimistic as to hope for comprehensive peace," he said. "In fact, we are rather apprehensive and fearful of widening the cycle of violence and bloodshed in the region. This is what we hope to avoid at the time being."

## Algeria's FIS vows continued struggle after municipal ballot

PARIS (R) — The outlawed radical Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) vowed Saturday to continue its struggle against the Algerian government in the wake of council elections last Thursday.

The FIS said in a statement that the town hall and provincial elections, which were won by supporters of the government, were aimed at legitimising continued repression.

"What the military junta actually did through these elections was only to legitimate repression and the continuation of the use of force to stay in power," a FIS statement said.

The statement, signed by FIS official Anwar Haddam, said the elections were neither free nor fair and would not help to end six years of conflict.

"The FIS will continue its action to free Algeria truly and completely and free the state institutions from the domination of a minority bent towards foreign interests," it said.

Election results released on Friday showed the National Democratic Rally (RND), which groups President Liamine Zeroul's supporters, won more than 50 per cent of the vote.

The former ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) took about 20 per cent and the Islamist-leaning Movement of Peaceful Society (MPS) around 10 per cent, the government said.

The FLN and MPS are junior partners in a three-party ruling coalition dominated by the RND.

Several legal opposition parties cried foul and rejected the results as fraudulent.

But the government said the ballot was free and fair and a victory for Algeria, cementing its unity in the face of Muslim guerrillas locked in a nearly six years of violence.

The FIS had called for a boycott of the poll.

The government reported a turnout of more than 60 per cent, a figure questioned by visiting foreign journalists who witnessed small voting queues.

About 65,000 people have died in violence in Algeria since early 1992 when the authorities scrapped a general election in which the FIS had taken a commanding lead.

## Clinton calls for 'pragmatic policy of engagement' towards China

WASHINGTON (AFP) — As he prepares for next week's China-U.S. summit, President Bill Clinton defended his "pragmatic policy of engagement" with Beijing in a speech on U.S. policy toward China.

Mr. Clinton's speech — his first major address on the subject since he took office nearly five years ago — has come just two days before Chinese President Jiang Zemin arrives for an eight-day state visit to the United States.

The "pragmatic policy of engagement" with China, Mr. Clinton said, means "expanding our areas of cooperation with China while confronting our differences openly and respectfully."

"Isolation of China is unworkable, counterproductive and potentially dangerous," said Mr. Clinton, apparently targeting some Christian groups on the right and trade unions on the left which oppose closer ties to Beijing.

Isolation "would encourage the Chinese to become hostile and to adopt policies of conflict," he added.

Cooperating with China "is the best way to advance our fundamental interests," including fighting proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, one of Washington's priorities, Mr. Clinton said.

The policy would also "promote a more open and free China" and hasten liberalisation there as, over time, the two countries cooperate in the political and economic spheres, Mr. Clinton argued.

"would close off, not open up, one of the world's most important markets," he said.

Mr. Clinton appears to have scored on the weapons issue: late Friday the Washington Post reported that U.S. officials reached an agreement limiting Chinese nuclear cooperation and arms sales to Iran.

The move clears the way for Mr. Clinton to approve the export of billions of dollars worth of advanced U.S. nuclear reactor technology for China.

The Clinton administration fears that Iran is using civilian nuclear industry know-how provided by China to secretly prepare nuclear weapons, and had forbidden the sale of U.S. nuclear reactors and technology for China's civilian use until China broke its links with Iran.

The newspaper quoted an unnamed U.S. official who said that China has given "very firm, clear and explicit assurances" that it will no longer assist Iran in developing its civilian nuclear power programme.

However, China offered positive but weaker assurances to U.S. officials that it will halt the sale of cruise missiles to Iran and limit transfer of technology and equipment for making ballistic missiles and chemical weapons, according to the Post.

Mr. Clinton said that while China had made progress in stopping the spread of deadly weapons, it still had some "troubling" weapons relationships. "China has lived up to its pledge not to assist

unsafeguarded nuclear facilities in third countries, and it is developing a system of export controls to prevent the transfer or sale of technology for weapons of mass destruction," he said.

"But China still maintains some troubling weapons supply relationships," the president said, adding that he would discuss ways to limit or end those relationships when he meets the Chinese president Wednesday.

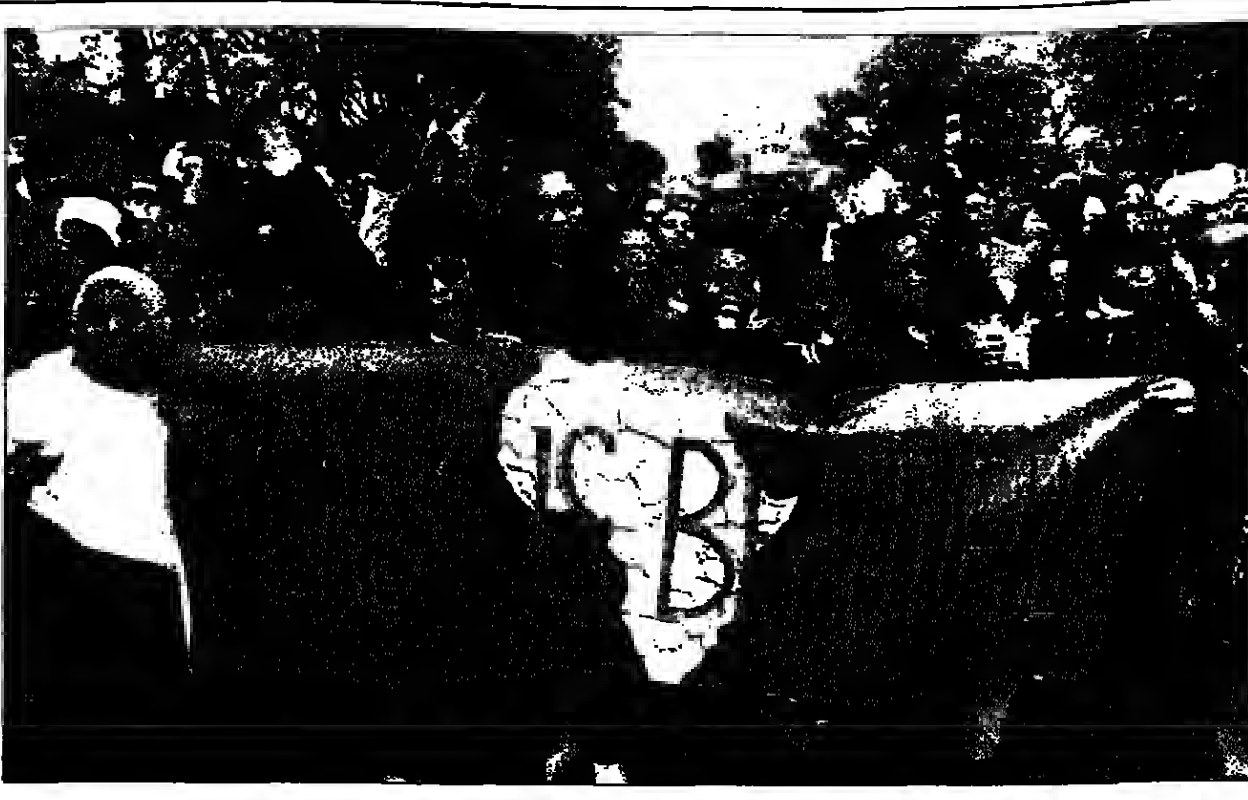
An announcement on the nuclear issue is expected to be the centrepiece of the summit — the first U.S.-China summit in eight years and the first state visit to Washington by a Chinese president in 12 years.

Mr. Jiang's visit, which begins Sunday in Hawaii, will seek to alter the perception of China in the United States, by turning the page on the June 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre which soured Sino-U.S. relations and opening a new era of cordial relations.

Scores of anti-China demonstrators will, however, seek to bring the Asian giant's flaws into focus.

Mr. Clinton made only one reference in Friday's speech to the events in Tiananmen Square and its aftermath, saying Chinese leaders "have stifled political dissent to a degree and in ways that we believe are fundamentally wrong."

The president's stance is partly based on economic interests, as U.S. firms pressure him not to let their European and Asian competitors get the upper hand in China's enormous market.



THE LOUD VOICE OF BLACK AMERICANS: African American women cheer during a speaker's comments at the Million Woman March on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway Sunday in Philadelphia. Organisers of the event are hoping it will create solidarity and empowerment among women of African descent (AFP photo)

## Sudanese government ready for peace talks with southern rebels

KHARTOUM (AFP) — The Sudanese government has completed its preparations for peace negotiations Tuesday in Nairobi with the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) under the auspices of the east African Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a senior Sudanese official said.

Foreign Minister of State Mustafa Osman Ismail, quoted by the official daily Al Anbaa, said the government would participate "with all the sincerity required for achieving peace," though he believed that the forthcoming talks would probably not be conclusive and that more rounds would be needed.

"I hope that peace will be achieved in the upcoming round but, in view of the composition of the [rebel] movement delegation chaired by its second-in-command, Silva Cur, (this) makes one believe that this round will not resolve the issues of discussion between the two sides," he was quoted as saying.

The minister therefore expected further rounds of talks would follow, and hoped that "the aspired for peace will ultimately be reached."

Mr. Ismail said the foreign ministry would send the names of the delegation of the Sudanese government to the Kenyan government which is hosting the talks in the coming two days.

The composition of the government delegation has not been revealed in Khartoum, although it was speculated that the team would include Foreign Minister Ali Osman Mohammad Taha, Federal Relations Minister Ali Al Haj Mohammad and South Sudan Coordination Council President Rick Machar.

The Islamic-backed military government of President Omar Al Bashir is at war with the SPLA, led by John Garang, which has been fighting since 1983 to end domination of the animist and Christian south of the country by the Arabised, Muslim north.

## Congress moves to sanction Russians on missiles for Iran

WASHINGTON (AP) — Growing concern over development of ballistic missiles by Iran triggered passage by a House Committee Friday of a sanctions bill aimed primarily against Russia.

Passage came on a unanimous voice vote of the House International Relations Committee despite Clinton administration objections that the tough action might not help prevent such transactions and could slap on sanctions based on flimsy evidence.

Several Democrats opposed some provisions of the bill, including language requiring only "credible information" for imposition of sanction, but none voted against it after Committee Chairman Representative Ben Gilman promised to work on further amendments before it goes to the house floor.

"It is clear that Russia has already provided Iran with critical know-how and technological support," Mr. Gilman said, adding that action is needed right away "to prevent Iran from achieving a significant advance in its missile programme."

The bill requires the president to submit within 30 days of passage a list of persons, corporations or government entities believed to have transferred or attempted to transfer missile goods or technology to Iran since mid-1995. Sanctions would include denial of arms export licences and a cutoff of all U.S. assistance to the entity for two years.

The bill allows the president to waive imposition of the sanctions if he deemed it essential to national security. Russia's Federal Security Service has acknowledged that Iran has tried to obtain missile technology from Russian companies, but insists that all attempts have failed.

Israel accuses a number of Russian companies of helping Iran develop missiles capable of hitting Israel, and pro-Israeli lobbyists have been active in pushing for U.S. sanctions. Iran denies it is trying to build long-range missiles or nuclear weapons.

U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Robert Einhorn, who objected to several of the bill's provisions, said after passage it was a "work in progress" and declined to say whether President Bill Clinton would veto it if changes weren't made.

During debate, Mr. Einhorn said the bill's provision that would impose sanctions retroactively against entities that had already sold materials to Iran could undermine current efforts by the Russian government to stop such transactions.

He said U.S. concerns over transfers of Russian missile technology to Iran had been raised by President Clinton with Russian President Boris Yeltsin as early as March and prior to that at lower levels.

Washington (AP) — British nurse Deborah Parry spent her 39th birthday alone in a Saudi Arabian jail on Saturday, still unaware of her fate on charges of murdering an Australian colleague.

However, a British embassy official said documentation of an agreement by murder victim Yvonne Gilford's brother to waive the threat of execution against Parry if convicted in return for "blood money" could be submitted to a Saudi court in the next few days.

Parry has not yet been convicted of the December murder of Gilford although fellow British nurse Lucille McLaughlan, 31, was sentenced to 500 lashes and eight years imprisonment as an accessory to the killing.

"There are some more administrative formalities to be done before the submission of the waiver to the court, which could be within a few days," said Alex Brown, spokesman for the British embassy in Riyadh.

Gilford's brother Frank announced his decision in Australia earlier this month to waive the death penalty against Parry in return for \$1.2 million, as is his right under the Islamic law practised in Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Brown said that Parry, from Alton in Hampshire, marked her birthday alone in her cell in Dammam prison, in eastern Saudi Arabia. "Deborah Parry has already celebrated her birthday last week with her family. She has been given some gifts," he said.

Parry's sister and brother-in-law, Sandra and Jonathan Ashbee, visited the prison last weekend, along with relatives of McLaughlan, who comes from Dundee in Scotland.

Brown added that the British consul in Riyadh was due to visit Parry next Thursday. He told Agence France Presse last week that the two women were not being badly treated and that their prison conditions had improved.

Saudi Arabia's ambassador in London, Ghazi Algosaihi, said last week that the two nurses may now only face five years in jail following Gilford's decision.

"According to the Saudi legal system, when the next of kin pardons, as he did, the court will apply the lesser sentence of jail, usually not exceeding five years," Mr. Algosaihi said in a statement.

The nurses both deny murdering 55-year-old Gilford on December 12, and retracted confessions they said were made under sexual and physical duress. Gilford was found stabbed 13 times, battered and suffocated.

On Wednesday, Mr. Frank Gilford's lawyer said the death penalty waiver could not be delivered to the Saudi court because the British nurses' Australian counsel had yet to receive the necessary instructions from their Saudi lawyer "to accept the waiver and to proceed with performance of the settlement agreement."

"We hope that the nurses' lawyers in Saudi Arabia and Australia coordinate with one another so we can submit the waiver without further delay," Ghassan Al Awaji from the International Law Firm (ILF) said.



Tardy Mandela gets away with protocol violation

EDINBURGH (AP) — It's simply not done to arrive after Queen Elizabeth II. But Nelson Mandela got away with it Friday when he showed up slightly behind schedule for the opening of a Commonwealth summit. The queen was chatting with Tony Blair in the lobby of Edinburgh's International Conference Centre when the British prime minister glanced around and broke away to welcome South Africa's president. "Hello, Tony, how are you?" Mandela boomed at the approaching Blair. Together, they moved inside and, as they neared the queen, Mandela called out, "I'm terribly sorry, Your Majesty, that I'm late." And the old Mandela magic worked. The 78-year-old former political prisoner, in a trademark boldly printed shirt, was rewarded with a wide royal smile and a chat. Protocol dictates that everyone, even presidents, get there before royalty at public events.

Tom Cruise offers job to Diana's former butler

LONDON (AFP) — American actor Tom Cruise and his actress wife Nicole Kidman have offered a job to the former butler to the late Diana, Princess of Wales, several reports said here Saturday. The Mirror and Sun newspapers said Cruise took pity on Paul Burrell, 39, after Diana's funeral at Westminster Abbey in London, which Cruise and Kidman attended. Cruise, 35, who has lived in England periodically, was said to have met Burrell several times. "Paul hasn't accepted any offer yet," said a friend of Burrell's in the Mirror. "He is still terribly upset and wants time to think about his future." Burrell is also said to have been offered work by Mohammad Fayed, father of Diana's companion Dodi who died with her in the car crash in Paris, and actor Mel Gibson as well as Buckingham Palace.

Police prowl Paris forest for 'killer cat'

PARIS (AFP) — Police fanned out in a forest outside Paris on Saturday, tracking down a 50-kilogramme "killer cat" suspected of having already murdered a rabbit. Two units of elite CRS riot police were among 300 police, soldiers and firefighters prowling the Saint-Germain-en-Laye forest for the big feline, first sighted overnight Thursday. Fresh tracks have been discovered, together with the remains of a partly devoured rabbit that might have been the cat's victim, said Francis Yvelines prefecture, west of Paris. While the hunt continues, a 30-square-kilometre chunk of the vast forest — a favourite for Parisian weekend strollers — remained off-limits to the public.

Hilary Clinton will have special birthday cake

CHICAGO (AFP) — Sara Lee Corp. says it is making a special birthday cake for local native Hillary Clinton, who turns 50. Sara Lee Bakery said it will unveil the cake at a celebration Monday attended by the first lady at a cultural centre here. The company is promising "the largest, most intricate dessert Sara Lee has ever presented" but is not revealing any more. "The birthday cake that will be a surprise to everyone at the party" says Sara Lee Baker Al Voigt.

Japan grants \$170 million to schools in Gaza

Iraq wraps up talks with deputies cooperation

Jordan, Israel in a peace game